Tail of the Moon

Story &

Rinko Ueda

4

Tail of the Moon

Usagi is the granddaughter of the leader of a prestigious ninja village, but she's such a klutz that she's never made it out of the kiddie class. Frustrated with Usagi's lack of progress, her great-grandfather sends her to marry Lord Hanzo and have lots of ninja babies. But the lord has no interest in her or her childbearing potential!

Usagi will remain in Ieyasu's household forever, apart from her beloved Hanzo, unless she can come up with an elixir of eternal youth. Usagi journeys to a mountain to find a hermit who supposedly knows how to create such an elixir, but he has no intention of sharing his knowledge with her. Even if Usagi is successful, there are others who don't want to see her free to return to Hanzo's arms...

4

Story & Art by

Rinko Ueda

A romantic ninja adventure!

Shojo Beat

Tail of the Moon™

4

Story & Art by

Rinko Ueda

From the creator of *Ouran High School Host Club*!

Can a dying girl teach an immortal vampire how to live?

Millennium Snow™

by Bisco Hatori

New Series!

Only $8.99 each

Final Volume!

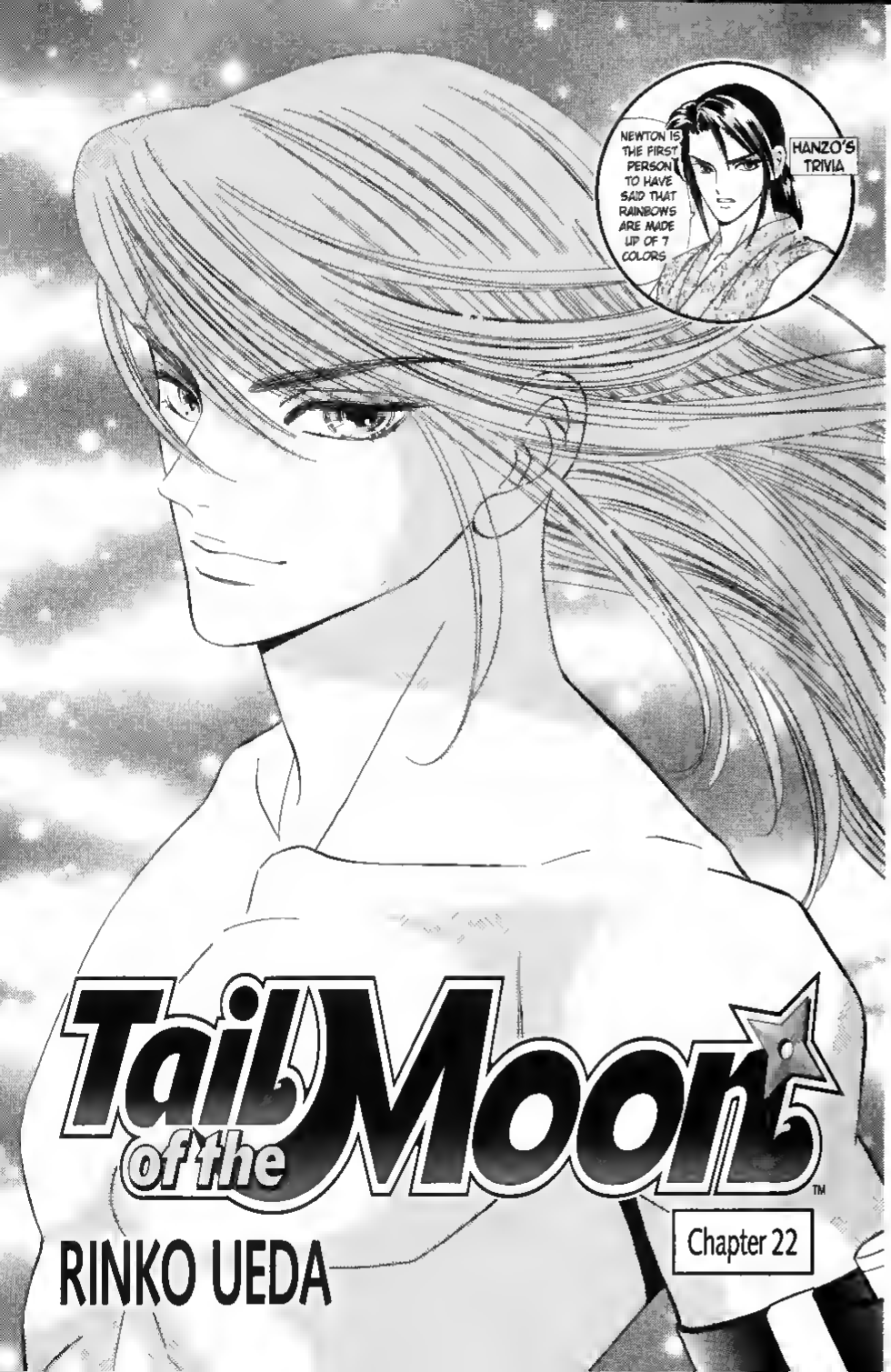
In stores April 3, 2007

Shojo Beat

viz media
www.viz.com

Bannen no Yuki © Bisco Hatori 1999/HAKUSENSHA, Inc.
CRIMSON HERO © 2002 by Mitsuba Takanashi/SHUEISHA Inc.
AISHITEKUZE BABY★★ © 2002 by Yuko Maki/ SHUEISHA Inc.
Rinkoi no Cards © Yuki Kure KOEI Co., Ltd. 2003/HAKUSENSHA, Inc.
TSUKI-NO SHIPPO © 2002 by Rinko Ueda/SHUEISHA Inc.
Covers subject to change

On sale at:
www.shojobeat.com
Also available at your local bookstore and comic store


NEWTON IS THE FIRST PERSON TO HAVE SAID THAT RAINBOWS ARE MADE UP OF 7 COLORS
HANZO'S TRIVIA
Tail of the Moon
Chapter 22
RINKO UEDA

Tail of the Moon

Volume 4

CONTENTS

Chapter 22 3

Chapter 23 29

Chapter 24 55

Chapter 25 81

Chapter 26 109

Chapter 27 135

Chapter 28 161

Glossary 188

Story Thus Far...

It is the Era of the Warring States. Usagi is a failure as a ninja, but she is a skilled herbalist. Aged 15 and unable to qualify as a ninja, she is suddenly ordered to get married!

The man who has been selected for her is Hattori Hanzo (aka "Shimo no Hanzo"), the most handsome man in all of Iga. But after rushing over to meet him, she is told by Hanzo himself that he has no intention of getting married. Usagi begins to train hard so that Hanzo will accept her.

Usagi starts living in Hamamatsu as Lord Tokugawa Ieyasu's herbalist. Not only is she forced to live away from Hanzo, but her senior herbalist, Yukimaru, hates women, making it hard on her... Lord Ieyasu tells Usagi that she may return to Iga if she succeeds in creating an elixir of eternal youth!

One day she learns about the existence of a legendary herbalist who may know how to make the elixir. He is a hermit who lives in the mountains of Iga, so she heads for his home with Goemon and the others. But the mountain he lives on is a dangerous place known as "The Mountain of Death"... Even so, Usagi climbs the mountain to meet the hermit...

IF KIDS EAT IT, THEY START GROWING HAIR ALL OVER THEIR BODIES!!
WAARGH!
FOR GOD'S SAKE, WHAT A LIE.
It's dangerous!
THIS IS...
...A MUSHROOM THAT ONLY ADULTS CAN EAT.
PLUK PLUK
IS THAT MUSHROOM EDIBLE?
I've never seen it before.
GOEMON, LET'S EAT BREAKFAST.
YEAH.
IT'S MATSUTAKE THIS MORNING.
HEY...
...WHY DID YOU TELL HIM?!
I'M NOT GOING TO LET YOU HOG THEM ALL YOURSELF.
ZZT
MY LEG... IT'S NO GOOD.
I'M SORRY. YURI, CAN YOU GO ALONG WITH HER?
...GOING TO STAY HERE.
Don't be such a pig!
I'M...
DO YOU SERIOUSLY THINK YOU'RE HIDING THOSE?

HOP
HOP
I GOT A GREAT NIGHT'S SLEEP.
OOOOH
USA, I GOT BREAKFAST.
DIG DIG DIG
PIGLET, USA-MARU...
...COME ON.
OOH! MATSUTAKE!!
DIG DIG DIG
OINK.
PIGLET?
WOO!
HERE'S A SESAME DUMPLING FOR YOUR HARD WORK!
YOU WORKED REALLY HARD FOR THE ZODIAC SERIES, MAMEZO.
OINK
MAMEZO'S MANY FACES♪
I LOOK JUST LIKE PIGLET.

Hello, Ue-Rin here! Continuing on from the last volume, I'd like to write about my research trip to Kouga this time ♪

I was very happy to receive fan letters for volume 3, as well as letters from people interested in visiting Iga after reading about my research trip.

Fans from Iga wrote letters, saying, "Please visit Iga again." ♡

THANK YOU! ♪

I'll visit Iga again.

standard fieldtrip outfit

LET'S GO, GOEMON!

I HEARD FROM A FRIEND IN HOJIRO YESTERDAY THAT USAGI IS CLIMBING UP A MOUNTAIN IN THE SOUTH IN SEARCH OF A HERMIT.

SEGACHI

TROMP

WHO KNOWS? IT'S USAGI, SO...

HERMIT?! WHY IS THAT?

TROMP

TOK

WHAT'S THIS ABOUT USAGI?!

PLEASE. IT'S REASSURING TO KNOW THAT YOU'RE GOING TO BE WITH HER...

NO, GOEMON.

GOEMON ...

NO! I CAME HERE BECAUSE I WANTED TO BE WITH YOU...

THAT'S WHY HE SHOULD COME WITH US.

USAGI...

...HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN THAT GOEMON HAS A BAD LEG?!

YOU'RE GOING TO COME WITH US!

THAT HERMIT... THE LEGENDARY HERBALIST MAY BE ABLE TO FIX GOEMON'S LEG, RIGHT?!

R-RIGHT...

IT LOOKS SHORTER, DOESN'T IT?
HMM...
THE PRINCESS FOUND OUT THAT YOU WENT DOWN TO OKAZAKI TO PLAY, SO CUT IT, DIDN'T SHE?
HUH?
HANZOU, YOUR HAIR...
YOU DESERVED IT.
...BUT SARA WOULDN'T BELIEVE ME.
AWFUL, ISN'T IT? I DIDN'T DO ANYTHING ...
She's scary...
EHH?!
HMPH
YOU SHOULD BELIEVE IN USAGI A LITTLE MORE TOO, YOU KNOW, HANZO.

WELL...
USAGI WENT TO THE MOUNTAIN IN THE SOUTH IN SEARCH OF A HERMIT...
WHAT HAPPENED TO USAGI?!
TROMP
OH! MASTER HANZO?
Did you overhear us from inside the bath..?
TROMP
MASTER HANZO, YOU HAVE AN ASSIGNMENT THIS AFTERNOON...
HOJIRO.
HUH?
TROMP TROMP
MASTER HANZO, WHERE ARE YOU GOING?!
OKAY.
YOU WORRY TOO MUCH...
TROMP
I'LL BE BACK A FLASH!!
AND YOU'RE NAKED...

I'VE FORCED GOEMON TO PUSH HIMSELF ALL THE TIME...
HUFF HUFF
DON'T PUSH YOURSELF TOO MUCH.
I'M FINE...
I'LL CHANGE WITH YOU...
I'M FINE!

YURI?
TMP
TMP

KLATT
A ROPE LADDER!
YOU'RE SO WELL PREPARED, YURI. ♡
YAY!

...SO I HAVE TO DO MY BEST RIGHT NOW!!
OH...
ANOTHER CLIFF...
WE WON'T BE ABLE TO CLIMB THIS...
HEY, CAN YOU TAKE MY PLACE FOR A MOMENT?
ME?
HUFF HUFF

HEEZE
HEEZE
TMP
G-GOEMON...
TELL ME IF YOUR LEG HURTS. WE CAN TAKE A REST IF YOU WANT TO...
HEEZE
HEEZE
TMP
I'M FINE.
YOU'RE THE ONE WHO WANTS TO TAKE A REST, RIGHT?
HEEZE HEEZE
USAGI IS MUCH STRONGER THAT YOU THINK.
THAT'S TRUE.
BUT I STILL CAN'T TRUST HER PHYSICAL CAPABILITIES.
I'M VERY WORRIED...

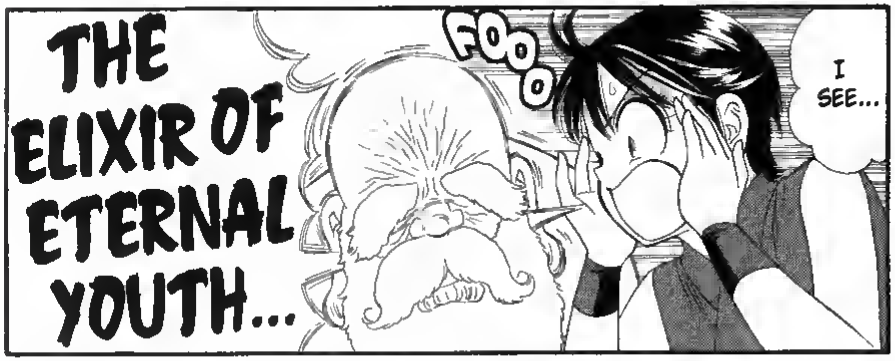
WE...
...DID IT...
WE'VE REACHED THE TOP OF THE MOUNTAIN!!
OINK.
OINK.
I WONDER WHERE THE HERMIT IS?
ME TOO...
HUFF HUFF
LET ME REST AWHILE...
FLOP
...THERE'S A HUT OVER HERE.
USA...
A HUT?!
I HOPE THIS HERMIT DOESN'T LIVE ON THE CLOUDS OR SOMETHING...
HUFF HUFF
Where is that hermit?
USAGI, WHY DON'T YOU REST A LITTLE?
DASH
DASH
DASH
DASH
YOO HOO!
MR. HERMIT!
WHERE ARE YOU, HERMIT?!

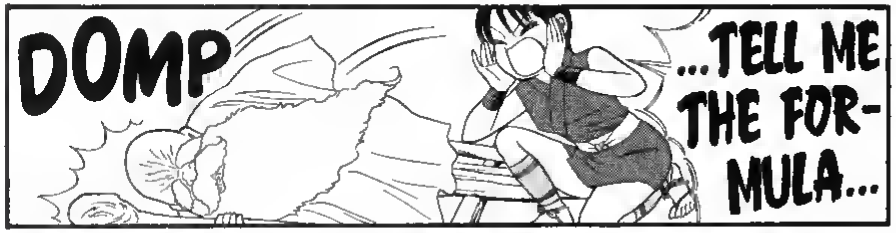
IT SURE IS A DIFFICULT PATH...
HEEZE
HEEZE
TMP
TMP
KRSH
KRSH
HE'S CLIMBING UP USING ONLY HIS ARMS!!
WOW.
IT'S ACTUALLY PRETTY HARD TO CLIMB UP A ROPE LADDER.
TMP
TMP
TMP
COME ON, USA.
YOU SHOULDN'T PAMPER HER SO MUCH!!
YOU WANT TO TAKE A REST?
HEEZE
HEEZE
WOW!
TMP
TMP
HUFF
HUFF

HERMITS ARE HUMAN TOO, YOU KNOW?
NO WAY, WE'RE TALKING ABOUT A HERMIT HERE.
TMP
TMP
YEEOW.
YEEOW?
LOOKS LIKE IT'S EMPTY...
IT'S SUCH AN OLD HUT...
ALL I DID WAS OPEN IT...
MAYBE THIS HERMIT DIED A LONG TIME AGO?
WOAH!
KLUNK
KLUNK
KLUNK

YOU'RE RIGHT!!
I CAN MEET THE HERMIT AT LAST!
EXCUSE ME!!
USAGI, DON'T GO ALONE.
TMP
TMP Umph Umph
SILENCE
Are you okay?
HUFF HUFF HUFF
WHAT ARE YOU BREAKING THE DOOR FOR?!
OH.
TONKTONKNK
Usagi...
KLAK
HELLO!!
TONK

MAYBE HE CAN'T HEAR THAT WELL?
HERMIT, ARE YOU LISTENING TO ME?!
SILENCE
PLEASE TEACH ME!!


THE ELIXIR OF ETERNAL YOUTH...
FOOO
I SEE...


DOMP
...TELL ME THE FOR-MULA...

SO HOW ARE YOU GOING TO TAKE RESPON-SIBILITY FOR THIS?
SHOULD I TAKE A LOOK?
BEHIND YOU...

IT WASN'T ON PURPOSE.

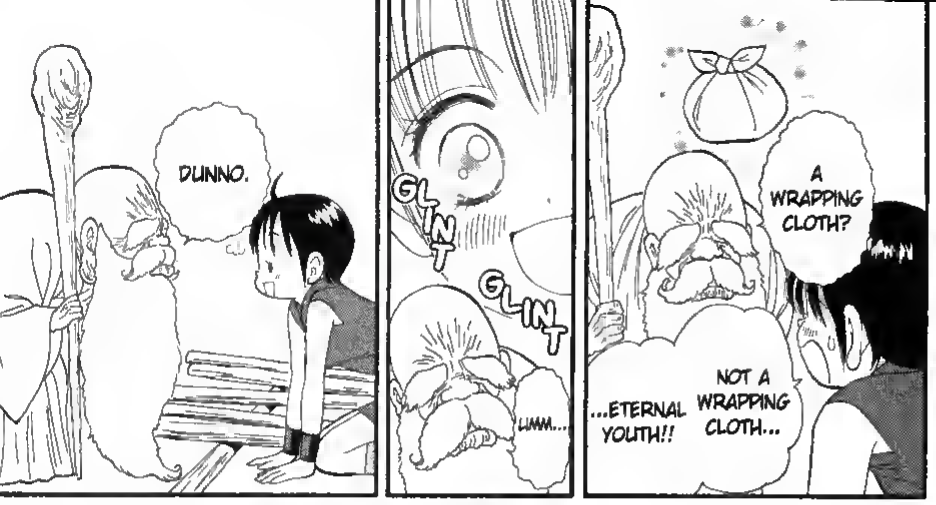
HERMIT?!
YOU KILLED THE HERMIT WITH THAT LOUD VOICE OF YOURS!!

KLUNK
KLUNK
H...
HE...
THE HERMIT?!

I CAME FROM HOJIRO TO ASK FOR A FORMULA TO MAKE AN ELIXIR OF ETERNAL YOUTH!!
I-I'M SORRY TO HAVE STEPPED ON YOU!!
SO IT REALLY WAS TRUE.
OH
KNEEL
HE'S TINY!!

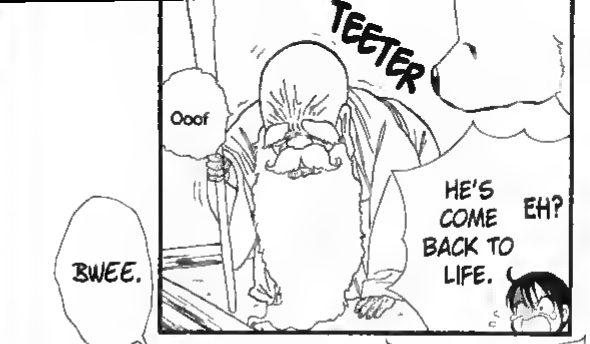
AAAH!
SWAP
DOK
USAGI?
BWEE?
AAAAH!
HERMIT...
YOU'VE GOT TO RUN!!
IT'S IMPOS-SIBLE!!
WE HAVE TO HELP HIM.
SHUT UP.
HE'S ALREADY DEAD FROM YOUR LOUD VOICE, USAGI!!
AAH!
DON'T GO NEAR IT.
HERMIT...
AAH!
A white bear...
I'LL NEVER TOUCH THAT BEAR.

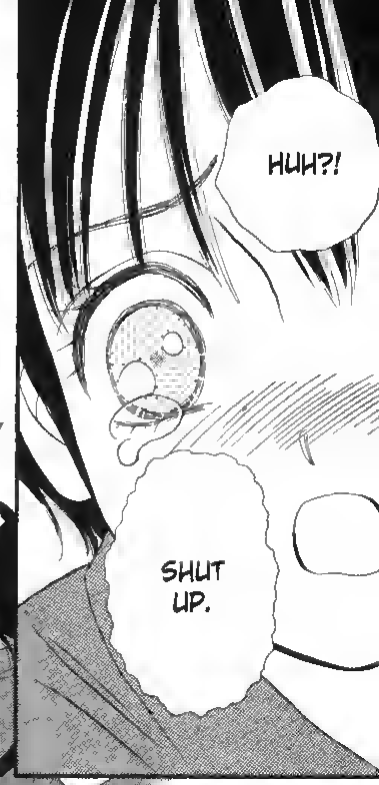
GAAR GH!
HELP!
WOAH!
TMP TMP
TMP TMP
EEEEK!
WAAARGH!
THE BEAR WILL EAT THE HERMIT!!
SQUISH
NO...
RUN, USAGI.


DUNNO.
GLINT
GLINT
HMM...
A WRAPPING CLOTH?
NOT A WRAPPING CLOTH...
...ETERNAL YOUTH!!

USAGI, YOU'RE BEING TOO RUDE. YOU DIDN'T EVEN BRING HIM A GIFT!
ISN'T THAT WHAT YOU DRANK TO LIVE FOR SUCH A LONG TIME?!
HUH, WHY?!

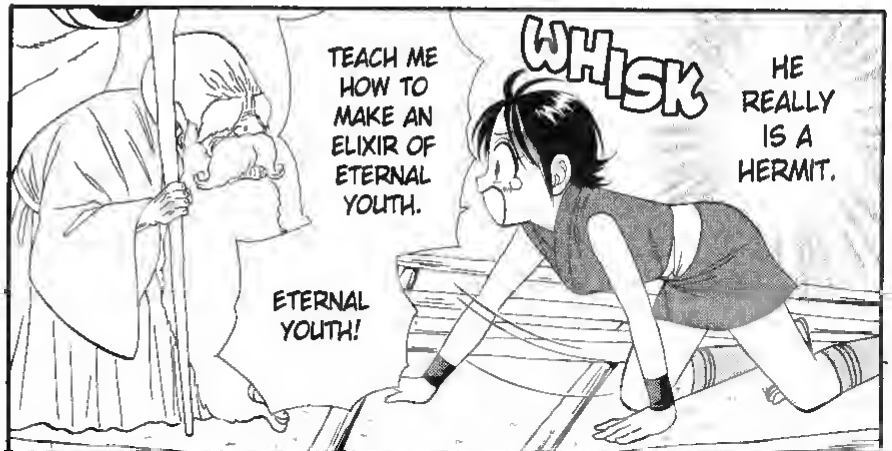
THERE REALLY WAS A HERMIT!!
I'VE ONLY GOT A LITTLE MORE TO DO BEFORE I CAN GO BACK TO HANZO'S PLACE!
DASH
RIGHT...
I'LL GO AND FIND SOME-THING!!
I'LL GO TOO.
ME... ME TOO.


TEETER
Ooof
HE'S COME BACK TO LIFE.
EH?


HUH?!
SHUT UP.

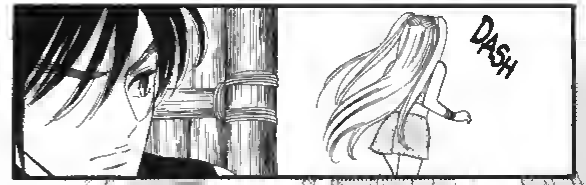
BWEE.
HERMIT...GET AWAY FROM THAT BEAR.
IT'S ONLY KU.
THERE'S NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT.

...I HAVEN'T HEARD THEM FOR SOME TIME...
WORDS ...
HEY, IT LOOKS LIKE HE CAN ACTUALLY HEAR...
IT'S YOUR PET BEAR?!
KU?!
KU the bear?


TEACH ME HOW TO MAKE AN ELIXIR OF ETERNAL YOUTH.
WHISK
HE REALLY IS A HERMIT.
ETERNAL YOUTH!

YOU CAN EVEN HAVE MY LIFE IF YOU WANT IT!!
IN RETURN, I'LL LISTEN TO ANYTHING YOU SAY!!
USAGI CAN GO BACK TO IGA AND MARRY THE MAN SHE'S IN LOVE WITH ONCE SHE HAS THE ELIXIR.

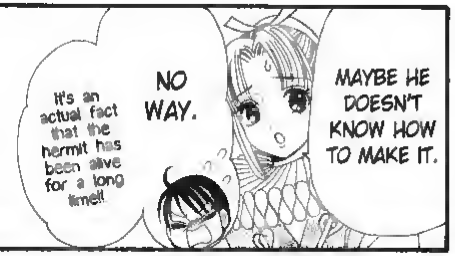
HEY, BEAR!!
I'M GOING TO SKIN YOU IF YOU DO ANYTHING TO GOEMON.
HOW CAN I REFUSE WHEN YOU LOOK AT ME LIKE THAT, GOEMON...
BLUSH
YURI, I WANT YOU TO GO WITH THEM.
I'm a little worried about them...
SHE'S SO UN-PREPARED...
PLEASE, YURI.
BUT GOEMON, I CAN'T LEAVE YOU ALONE HERE...


DASH

TEACH USAGI THE FORMULA FOR THE ELIXIR OF ETERNAL YOUTH!!
HERMIT...
...PLEASE!!

MATSUTAKE!!
OH WELL, I'LL GIVE YOU SOMETHING SPECIAL.
CHOMP
GRARR
HEY, THOSE ARE FOR THE HERMIT!!
CHOMP CHOMP CHOMP
!!

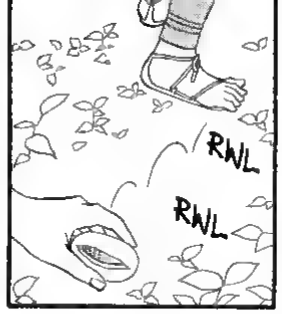
THE HERMIT...
...SEEMS TO BE PLEASED, ACTUALLY.
SOB SOB
CHOMP CHOMP
I'M GLAD YOU'RE HAPPY...
...KU.


It's an actual fact that the hermit has been alive for a long time!!
NO WAY.
MAYBE HE DOESN'T KNOW HOW TO MAKE IT.

HMPH
THE ELIXIR OF ETERNAL YOUTH IS REALLY SPECIAL, SO MAYBE HE DOESN'T WANT TO TEACH IT TO YOU RIGHT OFF THE BAT...

PIK PIK
STOP LOOKING FOR THE BEAR'S FLEAS AND TEACH ME HOW TO MAKE THE ELIXIR...

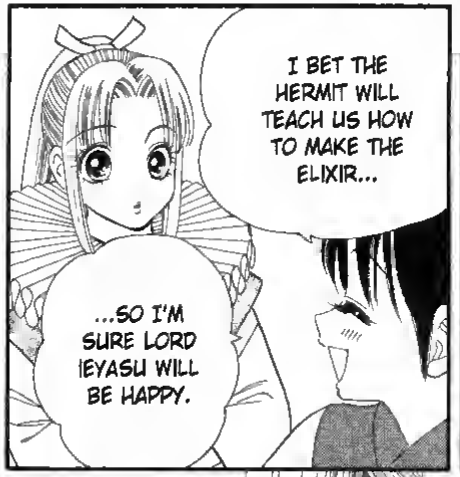
PLEASE, HERMIT.


RWL
RWL

DROP
OH!

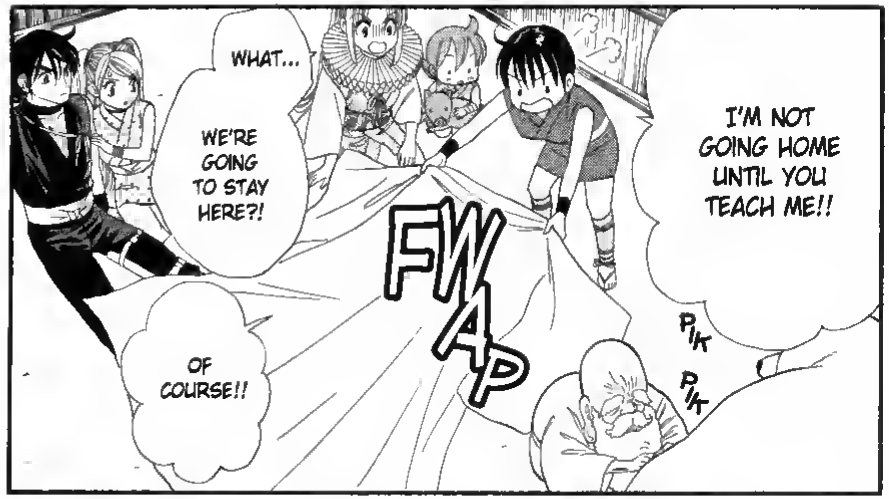
HUH?
WE'RE ALMOST THERE, YUKI.
THANKS.

PLEASE...
I WANT USAGI TO BE HAPPY...
YURI, THAT MUSHROOM IS POISONOUS.
I'VE PICKED QUITE A LOT.


I BET THE HERMIT WILL TEACH US HOW TO MAKE THE ELIXIR...
...SO I'M SURE LORD IEYASU WILL BE HAPPY.

I'VE BROUGHT YOU SOME GIFTS!!
HERE YOU ARE. CHOW DOWN! ♡
PLONK
I... GUESS SO...

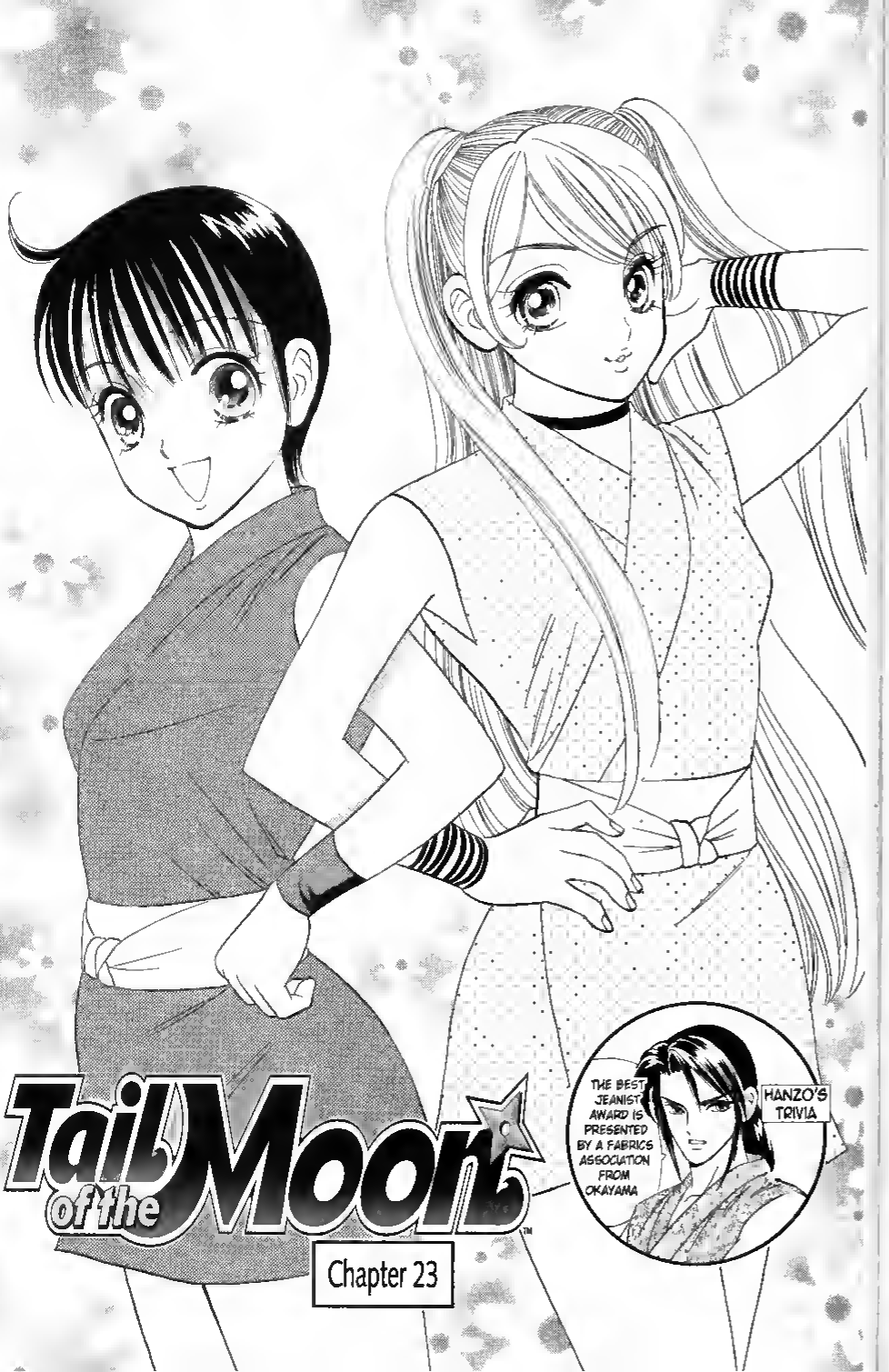
!!
VOP

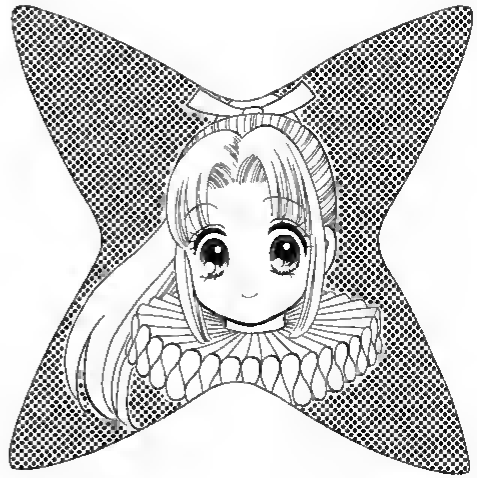

WHAT...
WE'RE GOING TO STAY HERE?!
OF COURSE!!
FWAP
I'M NOT GOING HOME UNTIL YOU TEACH ME!!
PIK
PIK

PUSH
THIS PIECE OF TRASH IS IN MY WAY!!

HUH?
BUMP
I'M GOING TO SLEEP!! I'M SO TIRED...

I CAN'T BELIEVE IT!!
WOAH, USAGI IS ASLEEP ALREADY.
ZZZZ


Tail of the Moon
Chapter 23
HANZO'S TRIVIA
THE BEST JEANIST AWARD IS PRESENTED BY A FABRICS ASSOCIATION FROM OKAYAMA



VUP
HMM...
DON'T...
YOU MAY BE AN OLD MAN, BUT YOU'LL GET NO MERCY FROM ME!
MUR... MUR...?
SO YOU'VE GIVEN YOURSELF AWAY AT LAST...
YOU MURDERER!!

DUCK
SWISH
!!
DODGE
SWISH
WHY YOU...

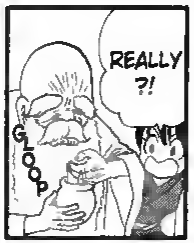
WHAT ARE YOU DOING TO THE HERMIT?
SWISH
SWISH
DODGE
DODGE
SWISH
DODGE
YOU!!
YOU!!

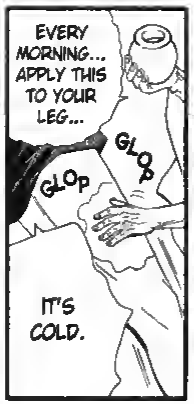
VOP
SHIX
YURI...

YUKI...
...WE'RE GOING TO BE ABLE TO SEE THE HERMIT TREAT GOEMON!!
YAY YAY
YAWN
BUT WHY DOES IT HAVE TO BE IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT?
HM...
OLD PEOPLE WAKE UP EARLY.

HERMIT, ARE YOU GOING TO BE ABLE TO FIX GOEMON'S LEG?!
HMMM...

WHAT KIND OF OINTMENT IS THAT?
RIN.


REALLY?!
GLOOP


EVERY MORNING... APPLY THIS TO YOUR LEG...
GLOP
GLOP
GLOP
IT'S COLD.

HMM...
NO PROBLEM.
REALLY?!
WOW
SHUP

WHAT ?!
YOU GUYS...
...CAN'T YOU TELL THAT THE HERMIT HAS NO INTENTIONS OF HARMING US?
B-BUT HE'S GOT A SICKLE IN HIS HAND...

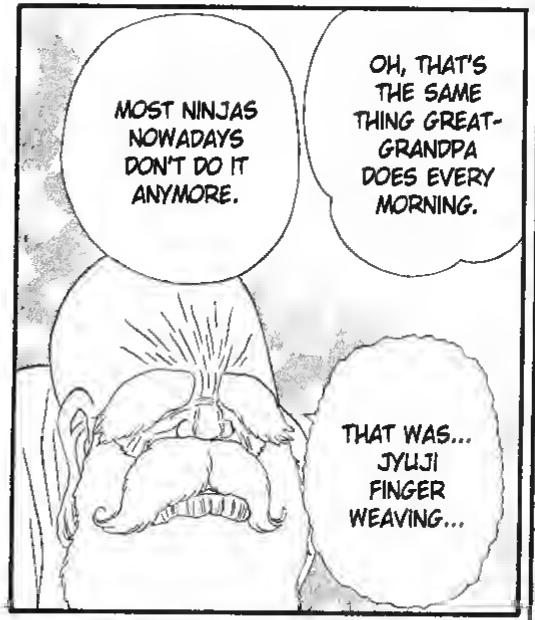
DON'T DO IT!
LET GO OF ME!
THIS OLD MAN WAS TRYING TO KILL YOU, YOU KNOW!!
WH-WHAT'S GOING ON?!
HUH?

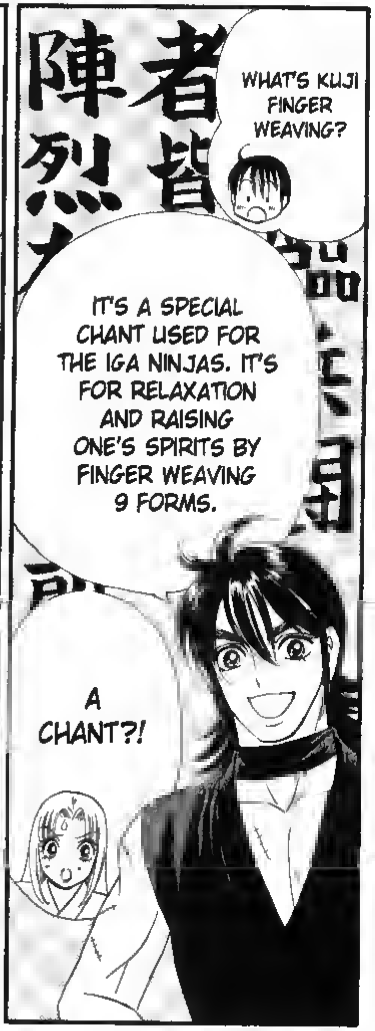
HMM...
YOUR LEG... LET ME SEE...
THE HERMIT WAS ONLY TRYING TO CUT THE KNOT ON THIS ROPE.
I SEE...
MR. HERMIT...!!

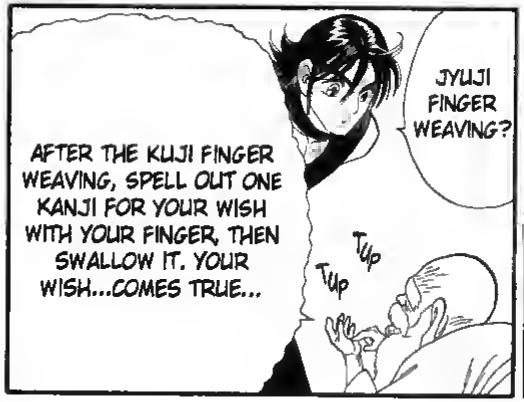
GOEMON!!
IT'S TRUE...
IT DOESN'T HURT!!
I'm so glad!!
TMP
TMP
WOW, IT DOESN'T HURT AT ALL!
Ah...
JUMP
YEAH.
DON'T MOVE IT TOO RAPIDLY...
VOOSH
HERMIT...
...YOU'RE A NINJA, AREN'T YOU?
HURRAY
HURRAY
I CAN JUMP! ♪
...

FWIP
FWIP
PYO!!
TOU!!
HA!!
KAI!
JIN!!
RETSU!!
ZAI!!
ZEN!!
JOLT
Pretending to swallow it
GULP
EH?
GOOD.
YOU'RE FINE NOW.
FINE NOW...
HUH?
SWALLOW IT.
BUT THERE'S NOTHING THERE...
...
SWALLOW IT.
PHEW...
WHA...
WHAT?!
ZE...
TUP
TUP

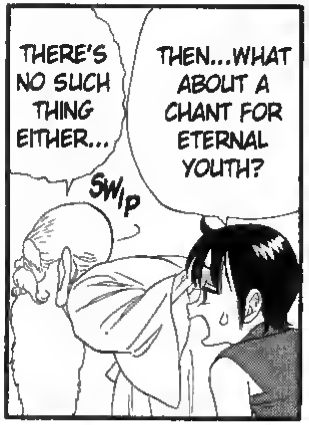
NO WONDER HE KEPT DODGING MY ATTACKS...
AND THE CHANT YOU JUST DID WAS THE KUJI FINGER WEAVING TECHNIQUE, RIGHT?
THAT IS A NINJA SICKLE.
A NINJA?!


MOST NINJAS NOWADAYS DON'T DO IT ANYMORE.
OH, THAT'S THE SAME THING GREAT-GRANDPA DOES EVERY MORNING.
THAT WAS... JYUJI FINGER WEAVING...


WHAT'S KUJI FINGER WEAVING?
IT'S A SPECIAL CHANT USED FOR THE IGA NINJAS. IT'S FOR RELAXATION AND RAISING ONE'S SPIRITS BY FINGER WEAVING 9 FORMS.
A CHANT?!


AFTER THE KUJI FINGER WEAVING, SPELL OUT ONE KANJI FOR YOUR WISH WITH YOUR FINGER, THEN SWALLOW IT. YOUR WISH...COMES TRUE...
JYUJI FINGER WEAVING?
TUP
TUP

I WANT TO LEARN THAT TOO!!
HERMIT!! WHAT DO I NEED TO WRITE FOR MY LOVE TO COME TRUE?!

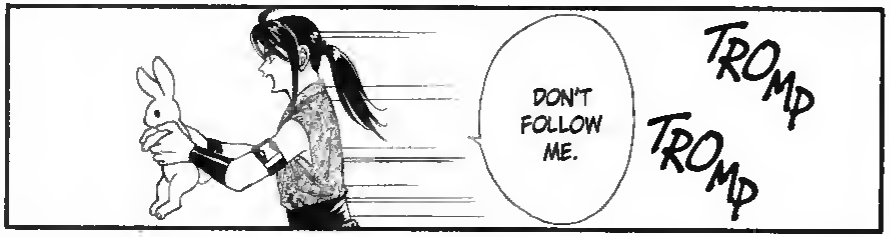

THERE'S NO SUCH THING EITHER...
THEN...WHAT ABOUT A CHANT FOR ETERNAL YOUTH?
SWIP

THERE'S NO SUCH THING...
DOOM

YOU'RE TALKING NONSENSE.
WAARGH
IF IT DOESN'T EXIST, THEN THINK OF ONE.
BUT I NEED IT.
I'VE COME THIS FAR, BUT IT SEEMS LIKE HANZO IS GETTING FARTHER AWAY...

YOUR WISH COMES TRUE?!
WHEN YOU WISH FOR RECOVERY, WRITE "ZE" ON YOUR HAND...
I'LL TELL EVERYBODY ABOUT THE KUJI AND JYUJI FINGER WEAVING!!
I'M GOING TO DO IT EVERY MORNING AND NIGHT FROM TODAY ON!!

TROMP
TROMP
GOODBYE.
...DON'T COME NEAR OUR FIELDS AGAIN.
NOW...
HOP
HOP
TROMP


DON'T FOLLOW ME.
TROMP
TROMP

HANZO...
CUT IT OUT...
VEEN
HOP
TROMP
HOP
TROMP

A RABBIT ...?
WE CAN MAKE A HOT POT WITH IT.

MASTER HANZO...
...I'VE CAUGHT IT AT LAST!!
HERE.
THIS IS THE RABBIT THAT'S BEEN RAIDING OUR VEGETABLES!!

I haven't had meat for some time.
GRILLING IT TASTES BETTER THAN PUTTING IT IN A HOT POT.

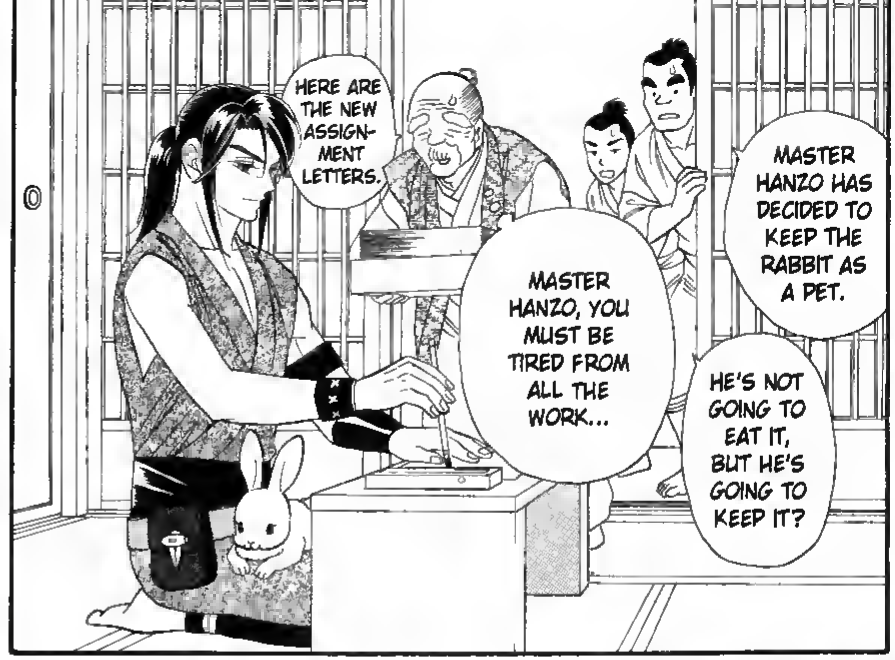
I WILL NOT ALLOW ANY POINTLESS KILLINGS!!
OUR BODIES ARE ALREADY FULLY GROWN!!
GRAB

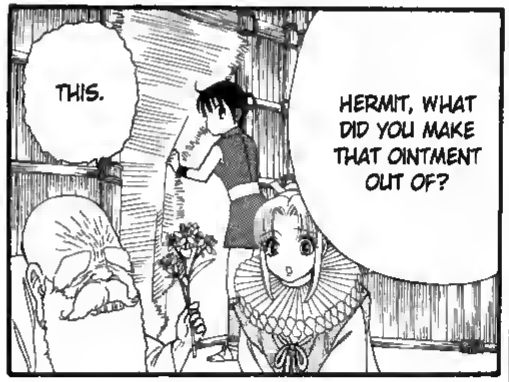
HOW MANY TIMES MUST I TELL YOU NOT TO EAT MEAT?!
It shows your body odor!!
YOUNG PEOPLE SHOULD EAT SOME MEAT SO THAT THEY'LL HAVE A STRONGER BODY...

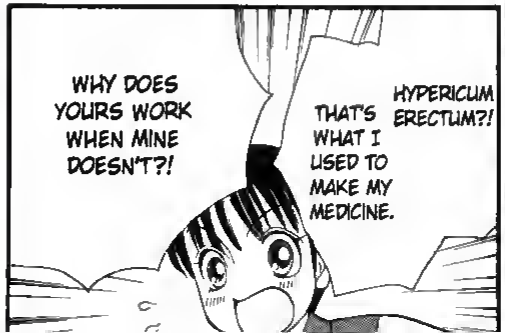
YOU...
...IDIOT.
HUH?

I'M GOING TO SET IT FREE!!
TROMP
TROMP
MASTER HANZO, WHERE ARE YOU GOING?

AND I TELL YOU THAT YOU'LL NEVER GET BETTER, HOW WOULD YOU FEEL?
IF YOU'RE GRAVELY ILL...
THEN HOW ABOUT IF I TOLD YOU IT WASN'T SERIOUS, THAT'D YOU'LL GET BETTER SOON?
WELL, I'D BE DEPRESSED.
DOH
ANYBODY CAN DO IT...
FOR EX-AMPLE ...
It's not sorcery.
TINK
THE JYUJI FINGER WEAVING HELPED...
HERMIT...
THAT CHANT?!
...CAN YOU USE SORCERY?!
ALL ILLNESSES COME FROM THE MIND...
PHEW
I'LL THINK I'D GET BETTER.
IT MAY BE A LIE... BUT THE BEST CURE FOR A PATIENT IS TO MAKE THEM FEEL MORE POSITIVE ABOUT IT.
BUT ISN'T THAT LYING?!


HERE ARE THE NEW ASSIGN-MENT LETTERS.
MASTER HANZO, YOU MUST BE TIRED FROM ALL THE WORK...
MASTER HANZO HAS DECIDED TO KEEP THE RABBIT AS A PET.
HE'S NOT GOING TO EAT IT, BUT HE'S GOING TO KEEP IT?

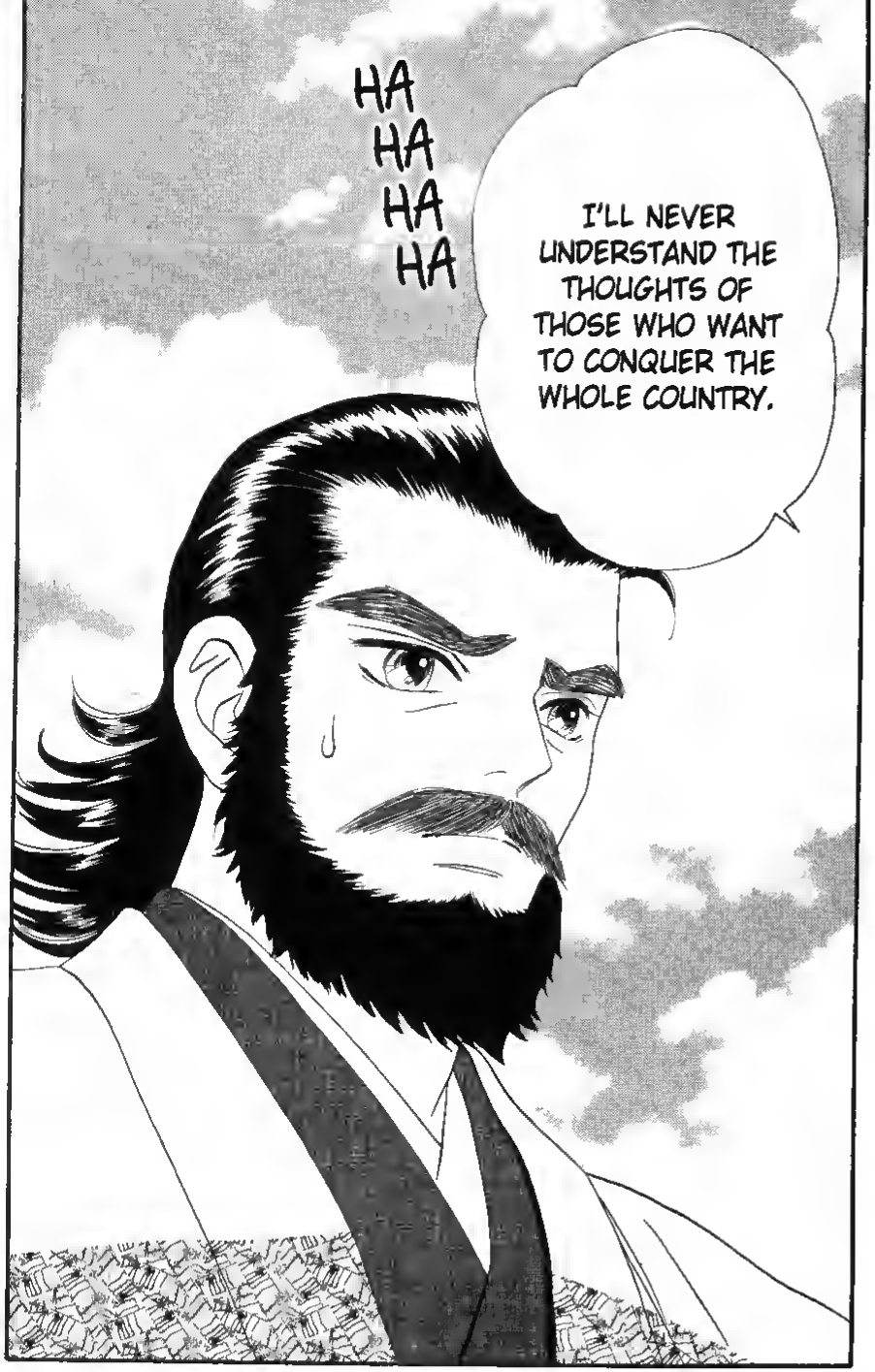

THIS.
HERMIT, WHAT DID YOU MAKE THAT OINTMENT OUT OF?


WHY DOES YOURS WORK WHEN MINE DOESN'T?!
THAT'S WHAT I USED TO MAKE MY MEDICINE.
HYPERICUM ERECTUM?!

...GOEMON'S LEG HAS COMPLETELY HEALED.
WOW...
Hey
What are you making?
A door

WHY...
YOUR DESIRE FOR ETERNAL YOUTH... IT'S A FOOLISH WISH. FORGET ABOUT IT...
EVERYTHING ALIVE IN THIS WORLD WILL EVENTUALLY DIE...
SO IT ALL BOILS DOWN TO FATE?!
GRIND
GRIND
YOU'RE BEING UNFAIR!!
ANYBODY WOULD WANT TO LIVE A LONG LIFE!!
WHY IS IT FOOLISH TO WISH FOR ETERNAL YOUTH?!
HOW COULD YOU BE SO UNFAIR WHEN YOU'VE LIVED FOR SUCH A LONG TIME?!

WHEN YOUR BODY IS NOT WELL, YOU FEEL NEGATIVE ABOUT EVERYTHING, AND FEAR AND IMPATIENCE ONLY MAKES YOUR BODY GROW WEAKER.
CURE...?
SO IF THE PATIENT FEELS MORE POSITIVE ABOUT THINGS, THEIR NATURAL HEALING POWERS GET STRONGER...IT WORKS... MUCH BETTER THAN ANY MEDICINE...
I'LL HELP.
RAISING PEOPLE'S SPIRITS IS REALLY IMPORTANT.
I GET IT.
THAT'S THEIR FATE...WE CAN'T GO AGAINST HEAVEN...
GRIND
GRIND
BUT THERE ARE PATIENTS WHO WILL NOT SURVIVE NO MATTER HOW YOU TRY TO HELP THEM...


HA HA HA HA
I'LL NEVER UNDERSTAND THE THOUGHTS OF THOSE WHO WANT TO CONQUER THE WHOLE COUNTRY.

YES, THAT'S A NICE-LOOKING RADISH...
HANZO...
THIS YEAR'S DAIKON ARE EXCELLENT. ♪
YOU SNEAKED OUT OF THE CASTLE TO DO FIELD WORK AGAIN...
HAMAMATSU
MY LORD!
TMP
TMP
GOODNESS, LORD NOBUNAGA WANTS MY MONEY TO FINANCE HIS WAR AGAIN...
I MEAN... YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO GO DOWN TO AZUCHI TODAY!!
IF YOU EXPAND YOUR TERRITORY AND BUILD A FINE COUNTRY, YOUR FAMILY WILL THRIVE TOO.
I'M FINE.
LET ME CARRY IT FOR YOU.
HA HA HA
THE POOR REALLY HAVE NO LEISURE TIME.
THE LARGER MY TERRITORY BECOMES, THE MORE WORRIES I WILL HAVE, WHICH WILL ONLY SHORTEN MY LIFE.
I DON'T LIKE WARS.

HM...?
COME ON, TELL ME WHAT YOUR NAME IS.
OH, THE HERMIT IS DONE WITH HIS FLEA SEARCHING.
WAAAH
I WANT TO GO BACK TO HANZO'S PLACE!!
ALL YOU SAY IS I FORGOT, AND I DON'T KNOW...
I FORGOT.
EH...
OH LOOK, FAT USAGI HAS BLOATED UP EVEN MORE.
NO I HAVEN'T!!
HMMP
TRY TO SUPPRESS IT. YOU'VE BEEN GETTING FAT LATELY, USAGI.
You look so funny
GOEMON, I'M HUNGRY.
GURGH
DIDN'T YOU JUST HAVE A PERSIM-MON?
BUT I'M STILL HUNGRY...
YOU'RE SO ANNOYING. IF YOU'RE GOING TO CRY, GO CRY OUTSIDE.
WAAAH
OH...
AH, FORGET IT...
I'LL MASSAGE YOUR SHOULDERS, HERMIT. OKAY?
TMP
TMP
KNAK
THEN I'LL MASSAGE YOUR SHOULDERS, GOEMON. ♡

ZZZ...
PIK
PIK
IT'S NO USE TALKING TO HIM NOW.
...HERMIT?
ONCE HE STARTS LOOKING FOR FLEAS, HE WON'T LISTEN TO PEOPLE.
MNCH
MNCH
...WHAT'S YOUR NAME, HERMIT?
BY THE WAY...
It's a lovely door
I REALLY HAD A TOUGH TIME BECAUSE I WAS CAUGHT BY YOUR FAMILY.
THAT REMINDS ME!
MNCH
MNCH
MAYBE ALL OLD MEN LIKE DOING IT?
GREAT GRANDPA LIKES LOOKING FOR FLEAS TOO.
MAYBE ALL THE PEOPLE OF MOMOCHI ARE STUPID?!
THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT I WANT TO ASK.
WHY DID THEY CATCH YOU?
MOMO...
MO...
STOP FIGHTING.
WHAT WAS THAT?!
YARGH
THOSE WHO CALL OTHERS STUPID ARE ACTUALLY THE STUPID ONES!
HUH, YOU KEEP CALLING ME STUPID...
YARGH

CAN I KEEP THIS SHINY VASE TOO?!
REALLY?!
SURE. THAT CONTAINER IS MADE OF SOMETHING CALLED GLASS.
IT'S...
...SO SWEET! ♡
YOU CAN HAVE ALL OF IT.
SNIFF SNIFF
POP
BA-BUMP
EH?
SQUEEZE
I LOVE YOU YUKI!!
THANK YOU.
YOU CAN EAT ALL OF IT.
BA-BUMP BA-BUMP
I'M SO HAPPY...
HEE
I'M GOING TO TAKE IT BACK TO HANZO AS A PRESENT...
NO!
NO.
IT'S SO PRETTY...

WHAT'S THIS?
CONFETTI.
IT'S CANDY BROUGHT OVER FROM THE WEST.
THEY LOOK LIKE STARS. ♡

TMP TMP TMP
WH...
WHAAAAH.
USAGI!!
WHAAAAH
WHAT'S WRONG? WHAT ARE YOU CRYING ABOUT?
HERE, YOU CAN HAVE THIS, SO STOP CRYING...
I GAVE ALL THE FOOD TO THE HERMIT YESTERDAY, SO I'VE GOT NOTHING LEFT.
GURG
GURG
NOT EVEN THE MATSU-TAKE...

"DATED"?
THE HERMIT'S WAY OF TREATING THE PATIENTS IS NOT WRONG...
THAT'S THE REALITY.
NO...
WESTERN MEDICINE IS REALLY AMAZING.
I'M CERTAIN OF IT NOW THAT I'VE MET THE HERMIT.
THEY'VE DONE RESEARCH ON THE STRUCTURE OF THE HUMAN BODY, AND THEIR TECHNIQUES ARE FAR MORE ADVANCED THAN THOSE IN JAPAN.
...BUT I BELIEVE RELYING ON HERBS AND CHANTS IS TOO DATED.

I GAVE THAT TO YOU, USAGI.
I'M SORRY...
I'LL TAKE GOOD CARE OF IT.
DON'T GIVE IT TO SOMEBODY ELSE!!

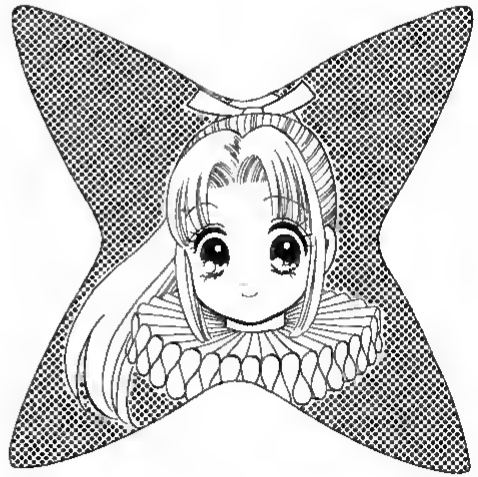
...
USAGI.
LET'S GIVE UP ABOUT THE ELIXIR AND GO BACK TO HAMAMATSU...
WHAT?
LIKE THE HERMIT SAID, AN ELIXIR OF ETERNAL YOUTH DOESN'T EXIST.

YUKI...
WHY DON'T YOU COME WITH ME?

I'M GOING TO GO ABROAD TO THE WEST TO STUDY.
I WANT TO STUDY OVER THERE SO THAT I CAN HELP AS MANY PATIENTS AS I CAN.

Tail of the Moon

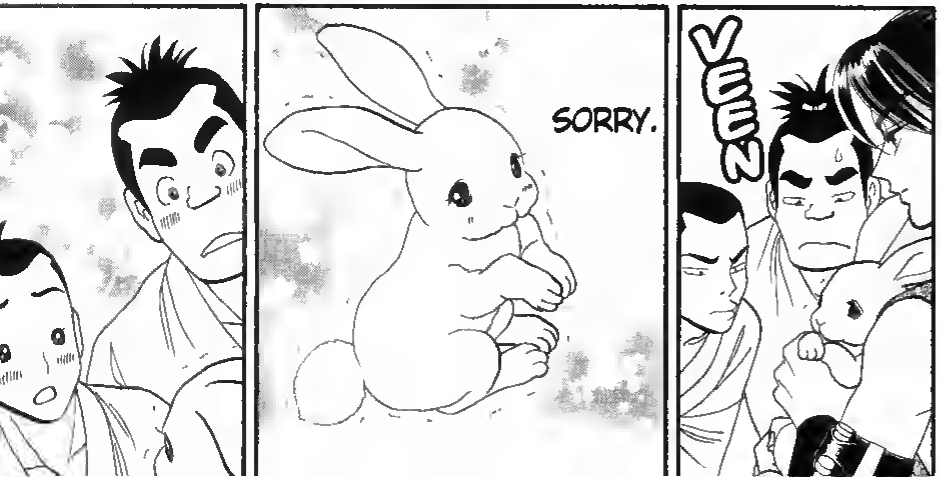
Chapter 24

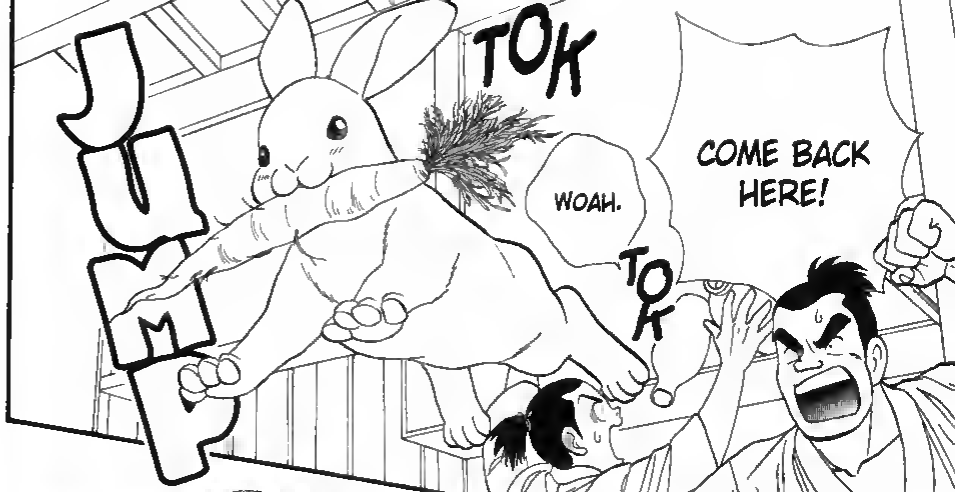


MAYBE YOU DIDN'T FEED IT ENOUGH?!
THAT RABBIT CREATED HAVOC IN THE KITCHEN.
YOU...
...CATCH THAT RABBIT, PLEASE!!
MASTER HANZO...
JUMP
WE FED IT THIS MORNING AND AT NOON!!
TODAY WE'RE REALLY GOING TO MAKE A HOTPOT OUT OF YOU!!

PYONKO?!
LOOK, YOU'VE TERRIFIED PYONKO...
HOW TERRI-BLE...
YOU PROBABLY DIDN'T GIVE IT ENOUGH FOOD.

HUH?!
YOU TWO TAKE A LOOK TOO.
JUST LOOKING AT PYONKO HELPS ME RELAX.


SORRY.
VEIN

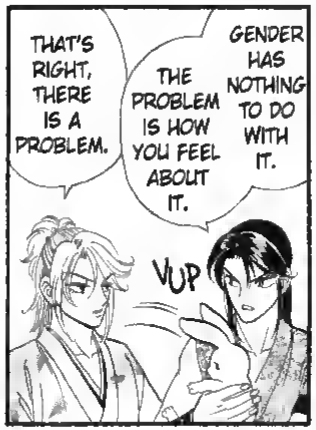

JUMP
TOK
WOAH.
TOK
COME BACK HERE!

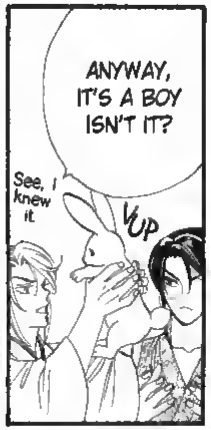
TROMP
ARGH!
IT'S SO FAST!!
ARGH!
IT'S OVER THERE NOW!!
TROMP
WHAT'S GOING ON?

IF I LET YOU TAKE CARE OF THIS CLAN, YOU'RE GOING TO DESTROY IT.
WHAT, YOU DON'T BELIEVE IN ME?
FORGET IT. JUST KEEP ON PLAYING WITH PYONKO!

STUDY ABROAD IN THE WEST...?

THE 3 STOOGES...
SEE?
YOU... YOU'RE SO CUTE, PYONKO...
YOU'RE RIGHT...


THAT'S RIGHT, THERE IS A PROBLEM.
THE PROBLEM IS HOW YOU FEEL ABOUT IT.
GENDER HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH IT.
VUP


ANYWAY, IT'S A BOY ISN'T IT?
See, I knew it
VUP

OKAY, I DON'T UNDER-STAND.
TMP
TMP
ONLY DELICATE PEOPLE CAN UNDERSTAND THIS FEELING.

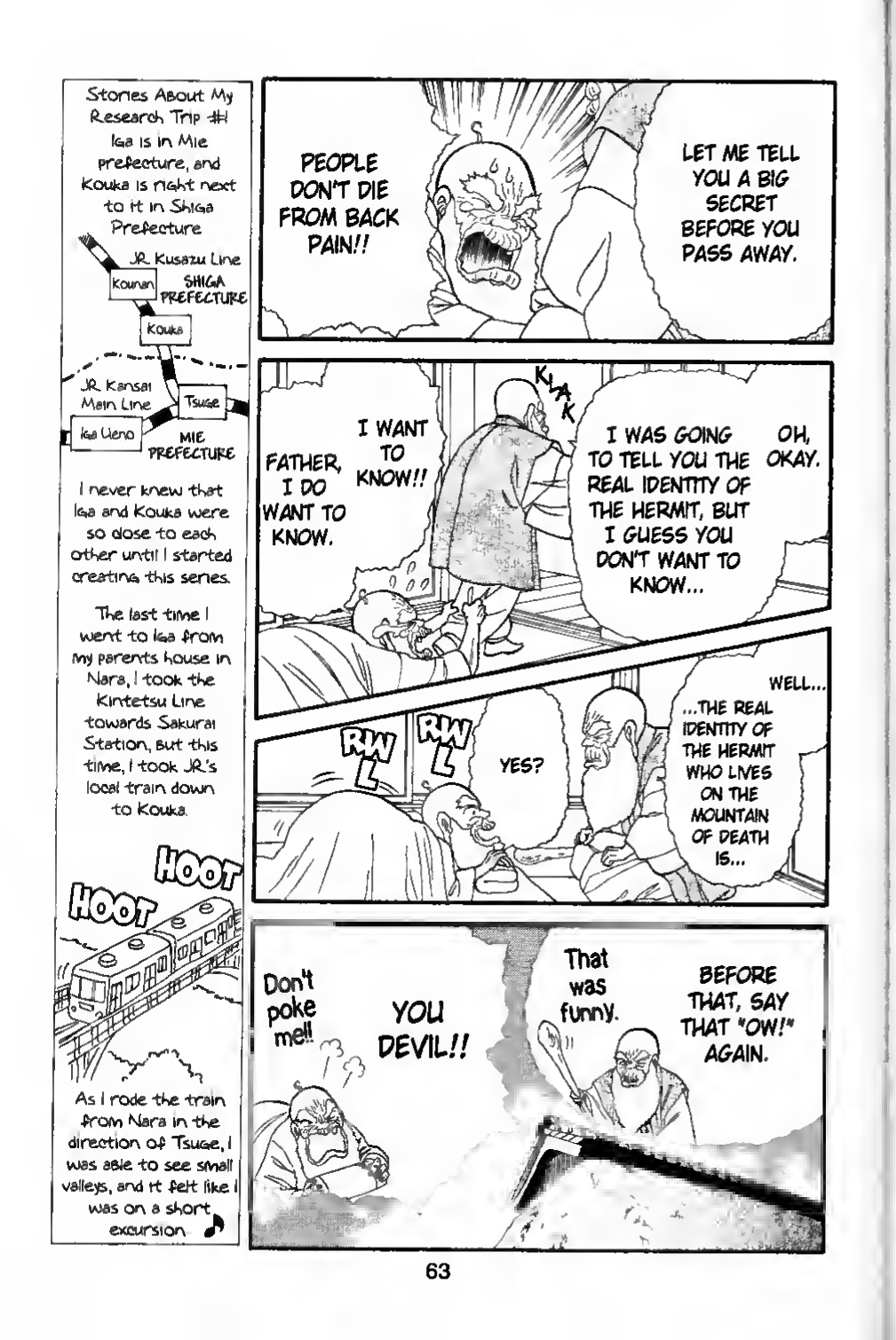
UNLIKE YOU, HANZOU, I'VE GOT A LOT OF WORK TO DO.
I'LL TAKE CARE OF THINGS FOR YOU. ♡

IF YOU'RE THAA...
He really emphasized it.
He did.
...AAAAT DESPERATE TO SEE USAGI, THEN WHY DON'T YOU JUST GO AND SEE HER?

DASH
WHAT'S THE MATTER?!
EH?
WHAT?!
ARE YOU REALLY GIVING ME THE ELIXIR?!
R-REALLY?
JUST... FOR YOU...
THANK YOU!!
HUG
I'M SO HAPPY! I'M SO HAPPY!♡
THAT'S GREAT, USAGI!!
...
BUT THANKS ANY-WAY.
YOU WERE BEING SO STINGY, HERMIT.
YUKI...
...THE HERMIT GAVE ME THE ELIXIR!!

I'M GOING BACK TO HANZO'S PLACE.
NO THANKS.
WHAT?
YES.
THE... THE SEA IS THAT HUGE POOL OF WATER, RIGHT?!
IS IT NEAR THE CITY?!
SO WHERE IS THAT?
IT'S ACROSS THE SEA-- FAR, FAR AWAY.
USAGI...
I CAN'T WAIT TO GO BACK...
WELL...
OKAY...

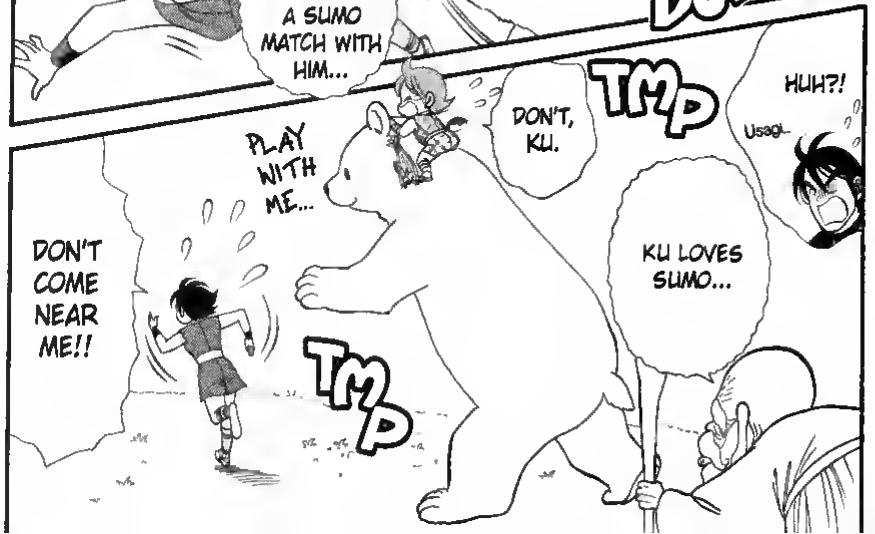
ELIXIR... OF ETERNAL YOUTH...
HUH...? POWDER...?!
WHOOPIE!
HERE.
IS IT SOME-THING I CAN EAT?
WHAT IS IT?!
TMP
TMP
OH, MR. HERMIT.


Stories About My Research Trip #1
Iga is in Mie prefecture, and Kouka is right next to it in Shiga Prefecture
JR Kusazu Line
Kounan
SHIGA PREFECTURE
Kouka
JR Kansai Main Line
Tsuge
Iga Ueno
MIE PREFECTURE
I never knew that Iga and Kouka were so close to each other until I started creating this series.
The last time I went to Iga from my parents house in Nara, I took the Kintetsu Line towards Sakurai Station, but this time, I took JR's local train down to Kouka.
HOOT
HOOT
As I rode the train from Nara in the direction of Tsuge, I was able to see small valleys, and it felt like I was on a short excursion
PEOPLE DON'T DIE FROM BACK PAIN!!
LET ME TELL YOU A BIG SECRET BEFORE YOU PASS AWAY.
FATHER, I DO WANT TO KNOW.
I WANT TO KNOW!!
KLAK
I WAS GOING TO TELL YOU THE REAL IDENTITY OF THE HERMIT, BUT I GUESS YOU DON'T WANT TO KNOW...
OH, OKAY.
RWL
RWL
YES?
WELL...
...THE REAL IDENTITY OF THE HERMIT WHO LIVES ON THE MOUNTAIN OF DEATH IS...
Don't poke me!!
YOU DEVIL!!
That was funny.
BEFORE THAT, SAY THAT "OW!" AGAIN.

CAN IT BE THAT THEY'VE BEEN KILLED BY THE HERMIT...?
THOK
ISN'T USAGI BACK YET...?
KLAK
HOJIRO
ZZT
ZZT
OWW.
OWW.
OW!
ZZT
ZZT
ZZT
POKE
SANDAYU...
HUH?!
YOU'RE OLD, AND DON'T HAVE MANY MORE YEARS TO LIVE...
SIGH...
ZZT
ZZT
ZZT
WHAT ARE YOU DOING TO A WOUNDED MAN LIKE ME?
YOU'RE A NINJA. YOU SHOULD HAVE NOTICED BEFORE I DID ANYTHING.
ZZT
ZZT
HEH HEH
THAT WAS FUNNY.
DO THAT AGAIN.
ZZT
ZZT
ZZT
WHOO...
WHAA...

HUG
OOH!
HE'S SO SOFT AND CUDDLY.
IS IT SAFE TO TOUCH IT?
GOOD BOY, GOOD BOY.
A WHITE... KU... STRAY BEAR...
Like those white deer you see sometimes.
I GUESS KU WAS KICKED OUT BY THE OTHER BEARS FOR BEING WHITE.
STRAY BEAR?!

YARGH!
HUGGING KU MEANS TO WANT TO HAVE A SUMO MATCH WITH HIM...
DOKUKOO!

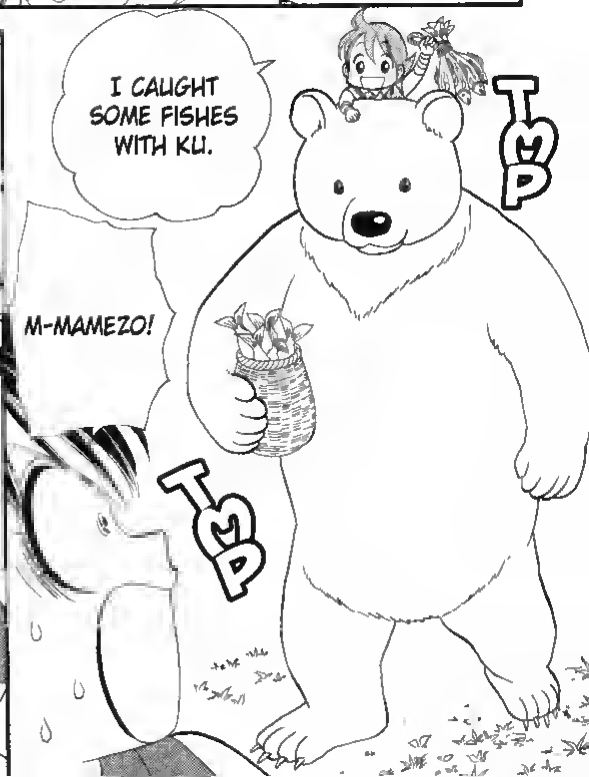

DON'T COME NEAR ME!!
PLAY WITH ME...
TMP
TMP
DON'T, KU.
KU LOVES SUMO...
HUH?!
Usagi...

DON'T EAT THEM YET.
OOOH!♡
YOU FOUND ALL THESE FRUITS IN THE MOUNTAIN BEHIND US?!
WOW.

TMP
USA.
TMP
I FEEL LIKE WE'RE SHORT OF SOMETHING FOR A FEAST WITH JUST FRUIT...
A FEAST.
FUMP
FUMP
FUMP
WE'RE GOING TO HAVE A FEAST WITH THE HERMIT TONIGHT, AND TOMORROW WE'LL MAKE OUR WAY DOWN THE MOUNTAIN AFTER SUNRISE.

KU ISN'T DANGER-OUS.
KU IS GREAT AT CATCH-ING FISH TOO.
GET AWAY FROM THE BEAR!!

AARGH
KU IS A KIND BEAR...
BUT A BEAR IS STILL A BEAR!!
HE'S DANGER-OUS!!


I CAUGHT SOME FISHES WITH KU.
TMP
M-MAMEZO!
TMP
TMP

USAGI?!
YOU'RE LONELY ALL BY YOURSELF ON THE TOP OF THIS MOUNTAIN, AREN'T YOU?!
HERMIT...
LET'S LEAVE THIS MOUNTAIN TOGETHER.
I'LL ASK GREAT GRANDPA TO GIVE YOU A PLACE TO LIVE.
IT'S JUST LIKE ME...
...BEFORE...
SNIP
I DON'T WANT TO.
COME ON, LET'S BEGIN THE FEAST, HERMIT. ♪
THE HERMIT LIKES IT HERE.
I DON'T WANT TO GO...
THE VILLAGE IS NOISY...

WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
IT'S A FRUIT WINE I MADE... A COUPLE OF DECADES AGO...
Wow, it's a vintage wine...
REALLY?!
TEETER
THIS AGAIN.
OH.
STUB
ALL WE NEED TO MAKE IT PERFECT IS SOME KIND OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE.
FRUIT AND FISH...
I'VE GOT... ALCOHOL...
HUH?
BUT IT'S ONLY A CLUMP OF ROTTEN FRUIT AND LEAVES.
...NOT TRASH.
THAT'S...
MAMEZO, GO AND THROW THIS AWAY.
I GUESS IT'S THE HERMIT'S DOLL.
GOOD BOY, GOOD BOY.

YOU'RE BOTH SO STINGY!!
OH!
GRAB
I CAN'T TRUST YOU, YURI!!
NO, YOU'RE THINKING ABOUT DRINKING IT, RIGHT?!
I'M ONLY LOOKING AT IT.
GIVE IT BACK.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
NO GOOD, USAGI!!
WHAT DID YOU SAY?!
STOP FIGHTING.
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!
VUP

IS THE HERMIT REALLY NOT LONELY HERE...?
KIDS CAN'T DRINK IT.
I WANT TO TRY IT TOO.
FWAH!
THIS WINE IS EXCELLENT!!
IT'S GREAT! ♪
SHR SHR
YOU EAT IT RAW, DON'T YOU, KU?
CHOMP CHOMP
CHEERS!!
ME NIE!
GLUG GLUG
SO IF I DRINK THIS, I'LL NEVER GROW ANY OLDER OR DIE?
OH.
WHEN DID YOU SNEAK UP BEHIND ME?
LET ME SEE THE ELIXIR
I CAN'T WAIT FOR TOMORROW.

GRAB
!
HOP
TMP
WHY DID YUKI DO THAT?!
YOU'RE NOT GOING ANYWHERE!!
I'M WAITING FOR AN EXPLANATION.
TMP
TMP
TMP
STOP IT!
DON'T BE MEAN TO YUKI!!
WHY DID YOU BURN IT?!
USAGI...
...
YUKI...?
UGH...

DON'T!!
I'VE GOT TO--
THE ELIXIR IS BURNING.
I HAD JUST GOTTEN HOLD OF IT AFTER SO MUCH HARDSHIP...
TUMP
THE ELIXIR!!
YOU...
WHAT DID YOU DO?!
DASH
COME BACK HERE!!

THE DEATH OF SOMEONE DEAR TO YOU...
...IS MORE PAINFUL THAN HAVING YOUR OWN BODY TORN APART...
WHY?
I...
...WAS AT THE DEATHBEDS OF MY CHILD, MY GRANDCHILD, AND MY GREAT-GRANDCHILD...
NO...
SUCH AN ELIXIR...IS BETTER OFF DESTROYED...
AND THEN I REALIZED SOMETHING...
I KEPT THINKING ABOUT DYING... ABOUT THOSE WHO HAD DIED...
10 YEARS... 20 YEARS...
AFTER I LOST MY GREAT-GREAT GRANDCHILD, I ENTERED THIS MOUNTAIN TO WAIT FOR MY DEATH...

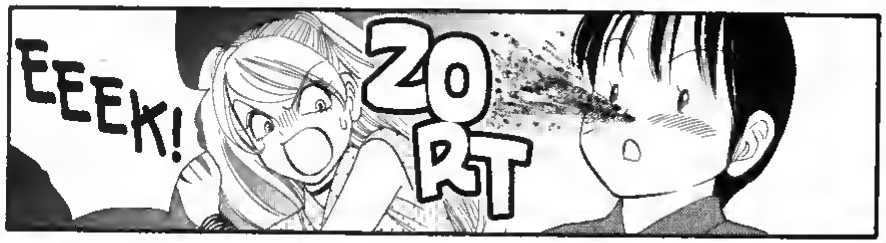
...YOU'D GO BACK TO IGA...
WHAT?
IF YOU HAD THE ELIXIR...
B-BECAUSE...
I DIDN'T WANT TO PART WITH YOU, USAGI...
I WON'T UNDERSTAND IF YOU KEEP CRYING...

WHY DOES USAGI GET ALL THE GUYS?
I'M SORRY.
I'M SORRY.
YUKI...
YOU SOUND LIKE A KID.
ARE YOU GOING TO MAKE ME ANOTHER ONE?!
NO NEED... TO APOLOGIZE...

GIVE BIRTH TO MANY CHILDREN...
PASS DOWN YOUR WAY OF LIFE, YOUR KNOWLEDGE FROM PEOPLE OF THE PAST...
JOINING ONE'S LIFE TO ANOTHER... TO LIVE FOREVER...
IT'S IN THE SAME CONTAINER AS THAT LOVE POTION.
ETERNAL LIFE?!
NOT ETERNAL YOUTH, BUT LIFE?
LOVE POTION IS JUST ANOTHER NAME FOR IT...
Unbelievable...
YOU ACTUALLY FORGOT ABOUT THAT, USAGI?!
OH, RIGHT.
MY ASSIGNMENT IS TO GIVE BIRTH TO HANZO'S CHILDREN AND TAKE CARE OF THEM.
LOTS OF CHILDREN...SO I GUESS THE LOVE POTION IS A KIND OF SEXUAL STIMULANT.

DAD AND MOM...
THE DEAD ARE ALIVE...?
AND SHIRO TOO...
THE DEAD ARE ALIVE FOREVER.
AS LONG AS I LIVE, THEY'LL BE ALIVE FOREVER...
THEY'RE ALIVE INSIDE ME...
THEY'RE ALIVE INSIDE ME...
I'LL GIVE YOU THE ELIXIR OF ETERNAL LIFE INSTEAD...

HMM, CUDDLE TOGETHER...
COME HERE.
LET'S CUDDLE.
WHY DON'T YOU CHANGE YOUR NAME TO "STUPIDEST IN JAPAN"?!
WHAT DO YOU MEAN, CUDDLE TOGETHER?
HOW WOULD I KNOW? I'M NOT MARRIED YET.
YOU HAVE A BABY AFTER YOU GET MARRIED AND CUDDLE NAKED WITH YOUR HUSBAND ON A FUTON!!


EEEK!
ZORT

HWOOD
WHAT'S THAT HOWLING SOUND?!
WHAT?!
SHOVE YOUR FINGERS IN YOUR NOSE...
Ur...
Urgh...
TAP
TAP
PLIP
PLIP
WHAT'S WITH THE NOSEBLEED?
IT...
...IT WON'T STOP...

YUKI, IF YOU TELL THAT TO LORD IEYASU, I'M SURE HE'D UNDERSTAND.
I THOUGHT IT WAS JUST A SIDE JOB BECAUSE I CAN'T WORK AS A NINJA, BUT IT'S ACTUALLY A REALLY IMPORTANT ASSIGNMENT!!

I DON'T MIND AT ALL.
DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT.
I'M REALLY SORRY...

BUT IT'S A PAIN I ENJOY. ♪
WHAT?
YURI...
...I'VE GOT SOMETHING I WANT TO ASK YOU.
?
I'LL BE THERE IN A MINUTE.
WE'RE GOING BACK TO THE HUT.

I'M GOING TO WORK HARD ON MY ASSIGNMENT!
HUH...
FOR REAL? YOU...
...REALLY DON'T MIND IT AT ALL?!
YOU CAN DO IT, USA.
IT'S REALLY A PAIN TO FALL IN LOVE WITH USAGI, YOU KNOW.

HUH?!
DON'T YOU EVEN KNOW THAT?!
UMM, DO YOU KNOW WHAT YOU HAVE TO DO TO MAKE BABIES?
WHAT DO YOU WANT?
FIST
FIST

SHWAA
SHWAA
YARK!
ZZT
ZZT
YARK!
TMP
USAGI!!
HANZO?!

GRRRR
THEY MUST HAVE SMELLED THE BLOOD.
WOLVES!!

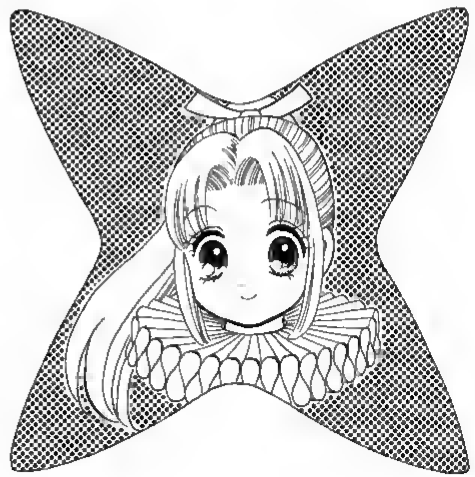
RWA
R
!
GARGH!

YOU LIKE ANIMALS, DON'T YOU?
OH WELL...
PAT

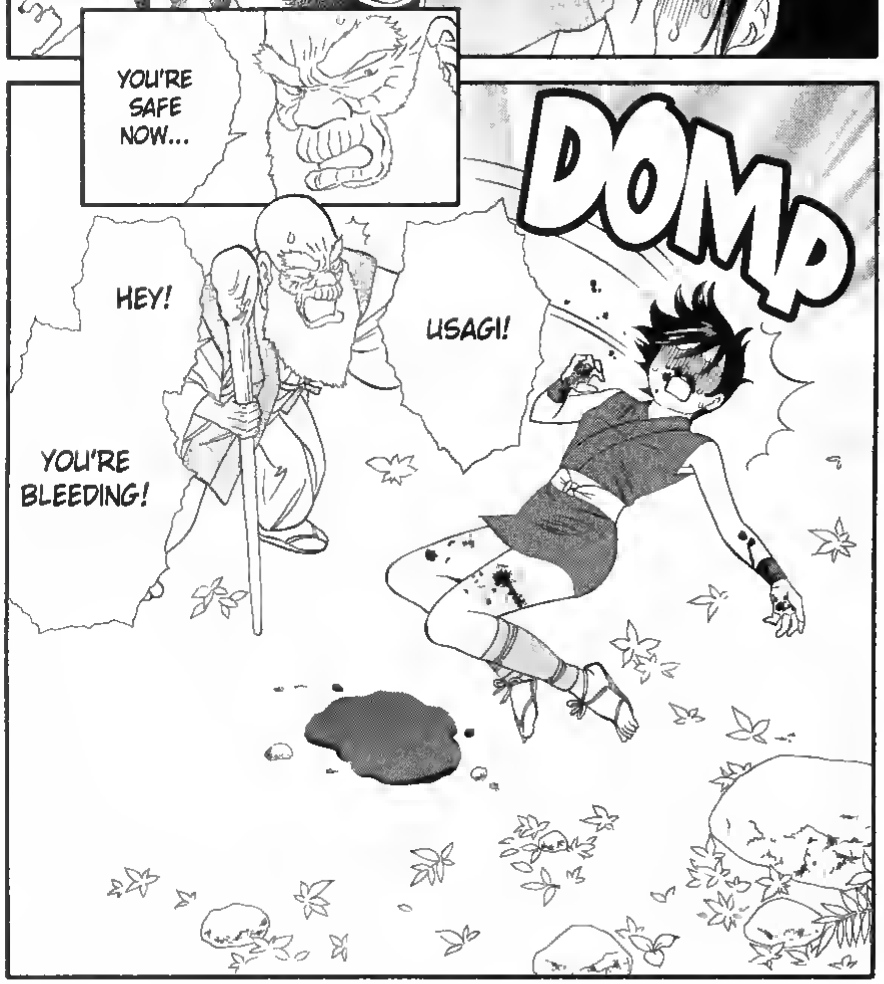
TMP
BYE.
YURI...
TMP

Tail of the Moon

Chapter 25



YARK
YARK
SHOO.
SHOO.
GO AWAY!!
WOLVES!!


YOU'RE SAFE NOW...
DOMP
HEY!
USAGI!
YOU'RE BLEEDING!

YEARGH!
IT'S...
...NOT HANZO.

MY NAME IS TANBA MOMOCHI. THE LEADER OF THE SOUTH IGA AREA.
HUH?
MASTER...?
SHU
SHU
...FOR SUCH A LONG TIME!!
AND I AM VERY SORRY TO HAVE CONDEMNED YOU, THE ANCESTOR OF THE MOMOCHI FAMILY, TO THIS MOUNTAIN...

DASH
WHAT?! SOMEONE JUST SCREAMED...
MASTER?!
NOSE-BLEED?!
OH, SHE MADE IT...
OH
WHAT HAPPENED?
USA, THERE'S BLOOD ON YOU!!
WAAARGH
IT'S ONLY A NOSEBLEED. DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT.
...
...ARE YOU THE HERMIT?
KNEEL
YES...

KNEEL DOWN, USAGI.
ALL OF YOU!!
ANCESTOR?!
THE HERMIT...
...IS MY ANCESTOR?!
WHAT?!
PLEASE FORGIVE US.
WE HAVE TAUGHT OUR PEOPLE THAT THIS WAS THE MOUNTAIN OF DEATH AFTER WE CONDEMNED YOU HERE, SO THAT NOBODY WOULD GO NEAR IT.
BUT... I STILL LEFT...
THE VILLAGERS WERE KIND AND TRIED TO STOP ME...
...SO I LEFT THE VILLAGE...
BECAUSE I WAS ALIVE, NOBODY COULD BECOME THE NEXT LEADER...
...AND ENTERED THIS MOUNTAIN...
I LEFT THE VILLAGE...
...WAS NOT CONDEMNED TO BE HERE...
I...
THIS HAPPENED A LONG TIME BEFORE I BECAME THE LEADER.
NOT ME!!
SNOOT
HOW MEAN!
GREAT-GRANDPA, YOU ABANDONED THE HERMIT HERE?!

GREAT-GRANDPA!!
WE'LL RESPECT YOUR DECISION.
VERY WELL.
THANKS.
BUT HE'S OUR ANCESTOR!
ISN'T IT BETTER TO JUST LET HIM DO AS HE LIKES?
AND FROM THIS MOMENT ON, THIS MOUNTAIN...
...WILL CHANGE ITS NAME FROM THE MOUNTAIN OF DEATH TO THE MOUNTAIN OF LIFE.

PLEASE COME BACK TO MY HOUSE--YOUR HOUSE!!
BUT YOU ARE OVER 200 YEARS OLD...
WE HAD CREATE A STORY TO HIDE THE FACT THAT WE HAD NOT BEEN ABLE TO STOP YOU FROM LEAVING...
THAT'S RIGHT, LET'S GO HOME!!
NO.
...GOING TO WATCH OVER IGA FROM THE TOP OF THIS MOUNTAIN FOREVER...
HERMIT...
I'M...

I... I DON'T WANT TO...
...GO BACK TO THE VILLAGE WITHOUT YOU.
PLUB
PLUB
...
THANKS FOR COMING OVER TO SEE ME...
HEY, USAGI...
...SAY GOODBYE TO HIM!!
HERMIT...
...I FEEL BAD LEAVING YOU HERE ALL ALONE...

TAKE CARE.
I'LL DROP BY AGAIN TO SEE YOU.
YES.
YOU CALLED?
CAN I COME TO PLAY WITH KU AGAIN?
OF COURSE.
I'M SORRY TO HAVE BURNED THAT ELIXIR...
DON'T WORRY
I'LL THANK YOU FOR THAT AS WELL.
THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR HEALING MY LEG!!
USAGI...

HEAVEN?
USAGI...
YOU LOOK A LOT LIKE MY MOTHER.
I WAS HAPPY WHEN I THOUGHT MY MOTHER HAD COME DOWN TO SEE ME.

PAT
PAT
WAAAAA...
I... WON'T BE LONELY.
I'VE GOT KU WITH ME...
AND YOU'LL...
...ALWAYS BE INSIDE MY HEART...
WE'LL ALWAYS BE TOGETHER.
WHEN YOU CAME HERE, I THOUGHT I WAS FINALLY GOING TO HEAVEN...
USAGI...
ALWAYS?
SOB
SOB

BYE-BYE.
I'LL COME BACK TO SEE YOU AFTER I GIVE BIRTH TO HANZO'S CHILD!!
BYE!
GOEMON...
...IT'S NOT "BYE," IT'S "SEE YOU AGAIN."
SEE YOU AGAIN.
SEE YOU.
TAKE CARE.

MY MOTHER WAS JUST LIKE YOU. SHE SMILED ALL THE TIME...
MR. HERMIT...
USAGI... DON'T FORGET TO SHOW ME YOUR CHILDREN...
I'LL TRY MY BEST...
SOB
SOB

I... I AM?
EH?
THE WORK YOU DID IS WORTHY OF BEING QUALIFIED.
YOU'LL HAVE NO PROBLEM WORKING AS A FULL-FLEDGED NINJA NOW.
THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

HERE'S THE ASSIGNMENT LETTER.
WELL THEN, IF YOU'RE THAT PERFECT, HERE'S AN ASSIGNMENT FOR YOU.
WHAT?
RIGHT NOW?!
GOEMON, LOOKS LIKE YOUR LEG IS PERFECTLY FINE NOW.
IT'S BETTER THAN PERFECT! ♪

WE MAY BE APART, BUT WE'LL ALWAYS BE TOGETHER.

Stories About My Research Trip #2

The aim of this trip was to visit the Kouga-ryu Ninjutsu House. It is located 2 minutes away from Kounan station!!

This is the Japanese-style house with a thatched roof of Mochizuki Izumonokami, who was the leader of the Kouga ninja clan. It was built around the Genroku era (1688-1703)

After I paid the entrance fee of 500 yen, a lady, who wasn't exactly a kunoichi, took me around the house, introducing me to all the gimmicks inside the house

☆ A hole behind the scroll picture

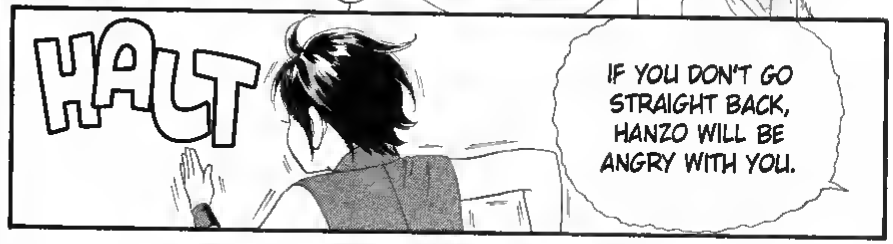
JUMP
WE'RE GOING TO DEDICATE OURSELVES TO OUR WORK!!
ME TOO?!
GOOD LUCK WITH YOUR FIRST ASSIGN-MENT.
ANYWAY, I'VE ALREADY REJECTED THE MARRIAGE TO MASTER HANZO.
NO, I DON'T.
SO IT'S NOT YURI'S SISTER...
SIGH. NOW YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE WHO'S NOT QUALIFIED AS A NINJA AT YOUR AGE...

THERE'S AN ASSIGNMENT THAT I NEED YOUR HELP ON!!
I WANT YOU TO COME WITH ME RIGHT NOW.
SHE LOOKS EXACTLY LIKE YURI.
WHAT?!
YUNA BECAME A PROSPECTIVE BRIDE TOO.
!!
I WAS LOOKING ALL OVER FOR YOU!!
YUNA?!
YURI'S SISTER!!
DO YOU KNOW WHO HANZO DECIDED TO MARRY?!

TMP
MASTER TANBA.
GOOD GRACIOUS.
TMP
YOU DON'T HAVE TO HURRY THAT MUCH!
VROOM
MAMEZO, THAT'S A GREAT IDEA!!
WAIT FOR ME, LISA.

You're an old man, so...
ARE YOU OKAY?
HANZO...
YOU ALWAYS COME AT THE WORST OF TIMES...
USAGI SET OUT FOR HAMAMATSU JUST THIS MINUTE.
TMP
HUFF
HUFF
TMP
IS USAGI STILL ON THE MOUNTAIN?!
ACK!

BA-BUMP
BA-BUMP
I KNEW IT! IT'S GOT TO BE ME!
BA-BUMP
BA-BUMP
USAGI, ARE YOU LISTENING TO ME?!
YUKI...
...CAN I DROP BY HANZO'S PLACE BEFORE GOING BACK TO HAMAMATSU?
HOP
HOP
HUH?
DASH
I CAN'T HOLD BACK ANYMORE!!
Usagi...

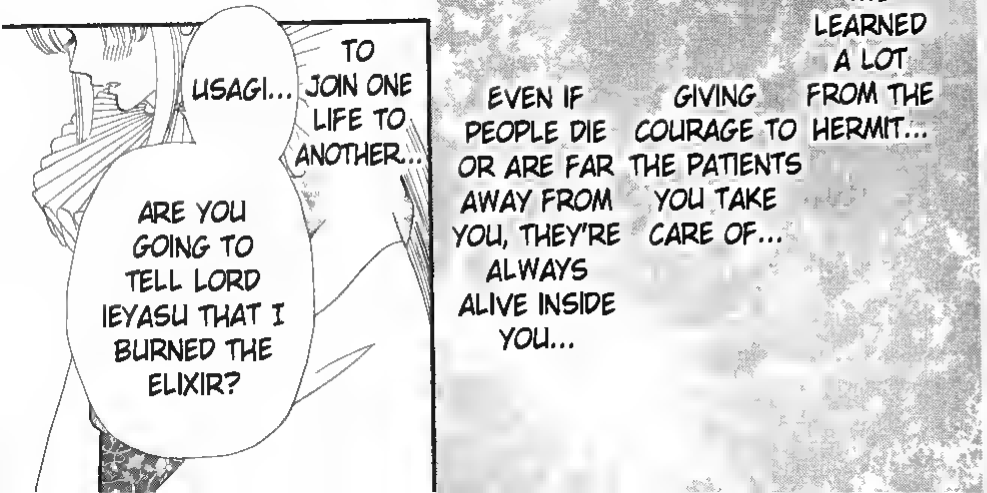

HALT
IF YOU DON'T GO STRAIGHT BACK, HANZO WILL BE ANGRY WITH YOU.

YOU CAN HURRY BACK TO HAMAMATSU AND THEN COME BACK TO IGA.
HAVE A SAFE JOURNEY.
TMP
TMP
LET'S GO BACK TO HAMAMATSU...
I don't want him to be angry with me...
TRUDGE
TRUDGE

HUFF
HUFF
I-IT'S... ONLY A LITTLE MORE TO...THE CASTLE...
I HAVE TO HURRY...
...AND GET LORD IEYASU'S PERMISSION...

TWO DAYS LATER
USAGI, DO YOU WANT TO TAKE A REST?
PHEW...
OOF...
I...I'M GOING TO KEEP GOING.
WOBBLE
WOBBLE
IT'S BECAUSE YOU RAN SO MUCH...

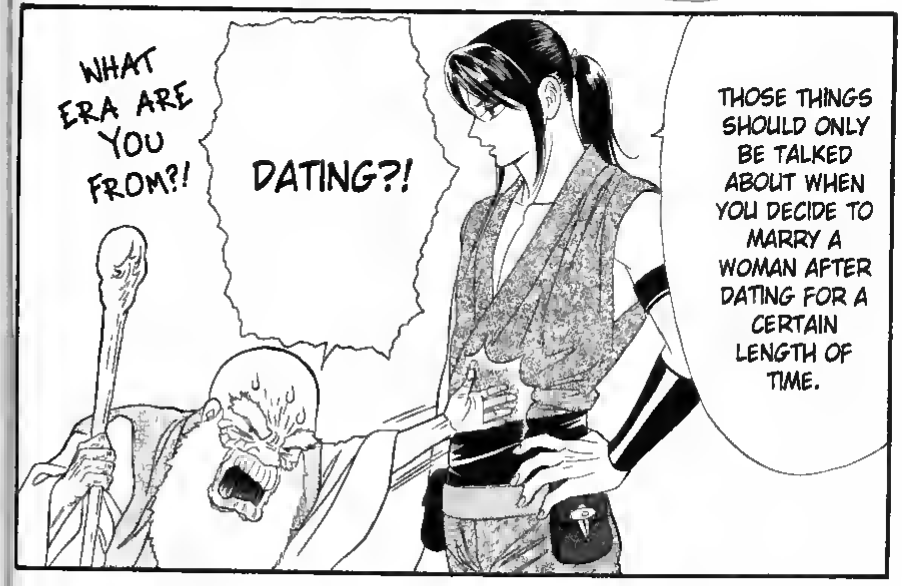
HUFF
MANY THINGS HAPPENED, BUT...
...TO GO BACK TO HANZO IN IGA.
HUFF
HUFF


USAGI...
TO JOIN ONE LIFE TO ANOTHER...
ARE YOU GOING TO TELL LORD IEYASU THAT I BURNED THE ELIXIR?
EVEN IF PEOPLE DIE OR ARE FAR AWAY FROM YOU, THEY'RE ALWAYS ALIVE INSIDE YOU...
GIVING COURAGE TO THE PATIENTS YOU TAKE CARE OF...
...I LEARNED A LOT FROM THE HERMIT...

HMM.
HANZO...
...DO YOU HAVE ANY INTENTIONS OF HAVING USAGI GIVE BIRTH TO YOUR CHILD?

HUFF
HUFF
IF YOU RUN, YOU CAN STILL CATCH UP WITH THEM.
NO...AS LONG AS I KNOW SHE'S SAFE AND SOUND, THEN I'M...

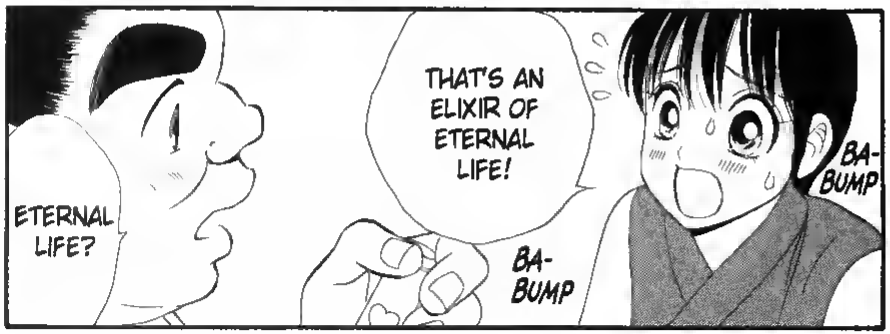
He's scary
I...I WAS ONLY ASKING!
CHILD?!


WHAT ERA ARE YOU FROM?!
DATING?!
THOSE THINGS SHOULD ONLY BE TALKED ABOUT WHEN YOU DECIDE TO MARRY A WOMAN AFTER DATING FOR A CERTAIN LENGTH OF TIME.

BA-BUMP
BA-BUMP
H-HERE IT IS!!
OOOH

FUMP
SO WHERE'S THE ELIXIR?!
I JUST CAME BACK FROM AZUCHI YESTERDAY.
HUFF
HUFF

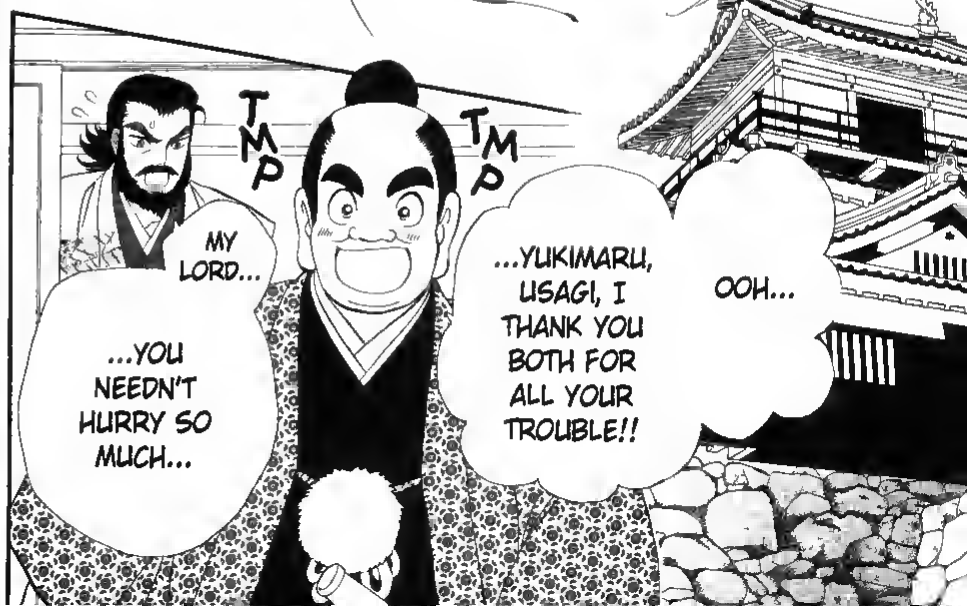
MY LORD... WELL... UMM...
EH, WELL...
THANK YOU VERY MUCH, YOU TWO!
SO THIS IS THE ELIXIR OF ETERNAL YOUTH!


ETERNAL LIFE?
THAT'S AN ELIXIR OF ETERNAL LIFE!
BA-BUMP
BA-BUMP

AS THE HERMIT SAID, PEOPLE DON'T NEED ETERNAL YOUTH AND LIFE, RIGHT?!
DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT.
BUT...
OF COURSE NOT.

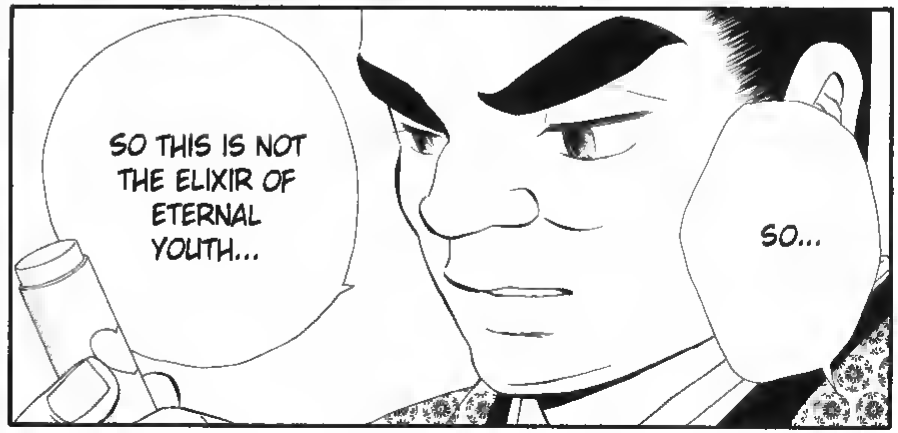
...WE CAN SEE THE CASTLE.
LOOK...
...

WE'LL... BE FINE...


TMP
TMP
MY LORD...
...YOU NEEDN'T HURRY SO MUCH...
...YUKIMARU, USAGI, I THANK YOU BOTH FOR ALL YOUR TROUBLE!!
OOH...

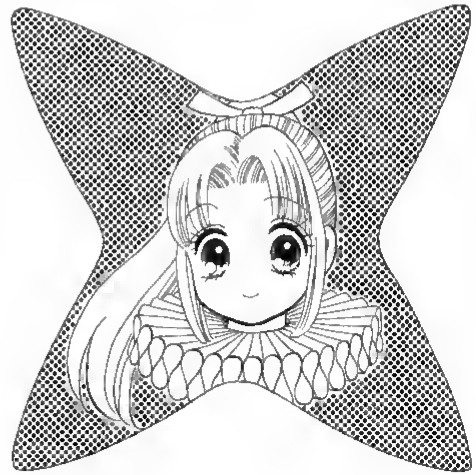
BUT THE REAL MEANING OF LIVING ETERNALLY IS...
WHAT I WANT IS ETERNAL YOUTH!
THIS ISN'T ENOUGH TO GET YOU BACK TO IGA, USAGI.

IT'S ACTUALLY A LOVE POTION.
THE HERMIT TAUGHT US THAT THE TRUE MEANING OF LIVING FOREVER IS TO LEAVE LOTS OF CHILDREN AND TO JOIN ONE LIFE TO THE NEXT.
I SEE...
EVEN IF YOU DIE, YOUR MEMORIES AND TEACHINGS WILL LIVE ON WITHIN THE HEARTS OF THE NEXT GENERATION...


SO THIS IS NOT THE ELIXIR OF ETERNAL YOUTH...
SO...

Tail of the Moon™

Chapter 26



...BUT PLEASE LET USAGI GO BACK TO IGA!!
I WILL RECEIVE ANY PUNISHMENT...
...THE HERMIT TAUGHT US THAT WE DON'T NEED THAT ELIXIR!!
THAT IS OUT OF THE QUESTION!!
LORD IEYASU...
...LEND ME YOUR STRENGTH...
MR. HERMIT...
I'LL CAST A CHANT ON YOU THAT WILL HELP YOU LIVE LONGER!!
I KNOW!
...AND HE ALSO TAUGHT US A CHANT...
YOU NEED TO LIVE IN A WAY SO THAT YOU WILL REMAIN IN THE HEARTS OF OTHERS...
Chant?
VUP
OH

"THIS ISN'T ENOUGH TO GET YOU BACK TO IGA."
NO...
...BUT I BURNED IT!!
AN ELIXIR OF ETERNAL YOUTH DID EXIST...
YUKI...
WHAT ?!
I AM VERY SORRY.
MY LORD!!

TOU!
RIN!
SHA!
PYO!
KAI!
I WANT TO GO BACK...
JIN!
RETSU!
I WANT TO GO BACK TO HANZO'S PLACE!!
ZAI!
ZEN!

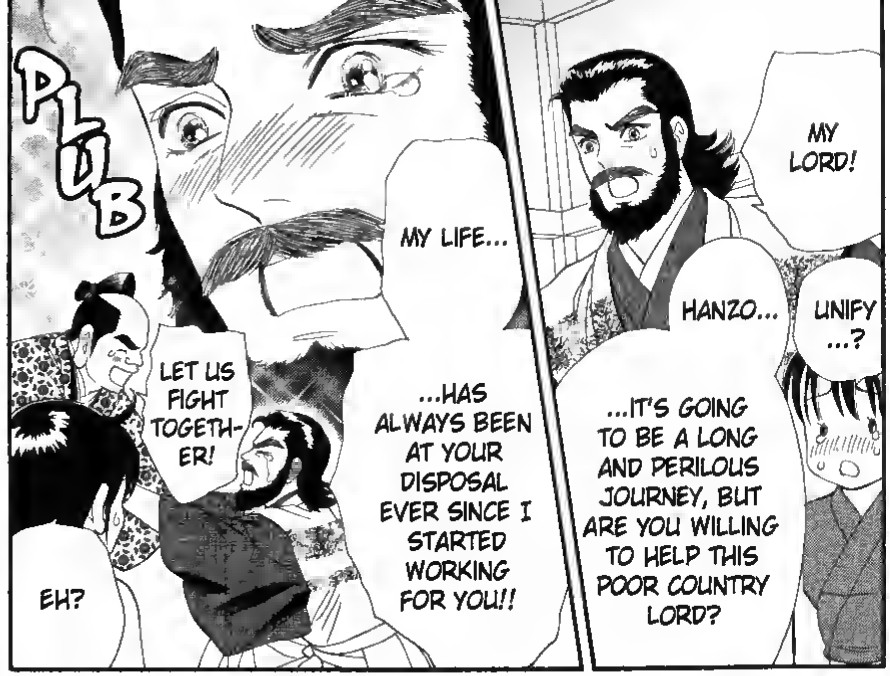
Wow, Yuki.
THAT'S IT!!
REALLY?!
I'LL DO IT TOO.
WHAT COMES NEXT?!
EH...
IT'S TOU, SHA, KAI, JIN, RETSU, ZAI, ZEN.
...
VISH
RIN!!
PYO!!
IF WE DO IT WITH FOUR PEOPLE, IT'S GOING TO BE A FOUR TIMES AS EFFECTIVE!!
OOH
ME TOO!
HERE, WHY DON'T I HELP TOO?
KUJI FINGER WEAVING.

READY, LORD IEYASU?
WH-WHAT?!
HERE WE GO...

...THEN I WILL STRIVE TO UNIFY THIS COUNTRY!!
IF IT IS MY DUTY TO CREATE A COUNTRY WHERE EVERYBODY IN THE FUTURE MAY LIVE PEACEFULLY...

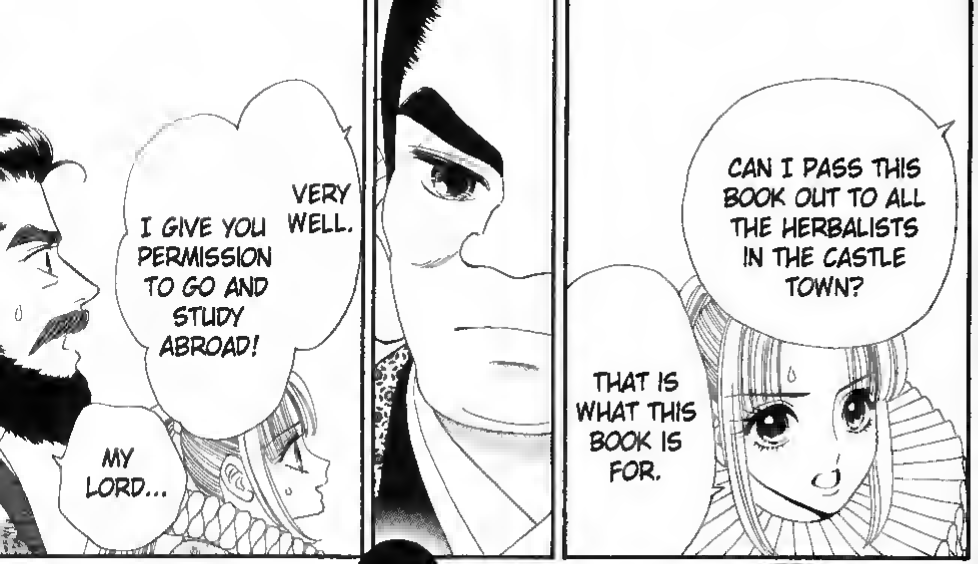
HAHAHAHA
I LOSE.
THAT'LL DO.
ONE MORE TIME.
RIN!!
PYO...
I HAVE BEEN A FOOL TO WISH FOR ETERNAL YOUTH BY MYSELF.
...AND TO HAVE YOUR CHILDREN PASS ON YOUR TEACHINGS....
THE TRUE MEANING OF ETERNAL LIFE IS TO BE IN THE HEARTS OF OTHERS AFTER DEATH...
...I AM GOING TO HAVE TO CREATE A FINE COUNTRY.
TO HAVE PEOPLE TALK OF ME UNTIL THE END OF TIME...
LORD IEYASU...

WHY HAVEN'T I BEEN INFORMED ABOUT IT?!
KNEEL
WEST?!
YUKI IS GOING ABROAD TO STUDY!!
I AM STILL INEXPERI-ENCED...
...SO I WOULD LIKE TO TRAVEL TO STUDY WESTERN MEDICINE.
THANK YOU, LORD IEYASU!!
WAARGH
UH-HUH!!
GOOD FOR YOU, USAGI...
GOOD LUCK GOING ABROAD TO THE WEST, YUKI!!!


PLUB
EH?
LET US FIGHT TOGETH-ER!
MY LIFE...
...HAS ALWAYS BEEN AT YOUR DISPOSAL EVER SINCE I STARTED WORKING FOR YOU!!
MY LORD!
HANZO...
UNIFY ...?
...IT'S GOING TO BE A LONG AND PERILOUS JOURNEY, BUT ARE YOU WILLING TO HELP THIS POOR COUNTRY LORD?

HUH?
I HAVEN'T DONE ANY-THING...
...THANKS TO YOU, I HAVE REALIZED MY TRUE ROLE IN LIFE.
USAGI...

YOU MAY GO BACK TO IGA.


CAN I PASS THIS BOOK OUT TO ALL THE HERBALISTS IN THE CASTLE TOWN?
THAT IS WHAT THIS BOOK IS FOR.
VERY WELL.
I GIVE YOU PERMISSION TO GO AND STUDY ABROAD!
MY LORD...

LIKE ME, YUKIMARU IS STRIVING TO REACH HIS GOALS.
I HAVE NO RIGHT TO STOP THAT.
THANK YOU VERY MUCH!

I HAVE WRITTEN DOWN EVERY CURE AND MEDICINE I KNOW OF.
I WILL LEAVE THIS WITH YOU.
BUT IF YOU ALSO LEAVE, THEN...

WOW!
IT'S EVEN GOT PICTURES.
I PROMISE I WILL COME BACK TO YOU WITH THE KNOWLEDGE OF WESTERN MEDICINE...
PLEASE PERMIT ME TO GO ABROAD.

THANK YOU.
BA-BUMP
USE THESE HANDS...
...TO HELP A LOT OF PEOPLE.
I KNOW YOU CAN DO IT, YUKI.

SKRTCH SKRTCH
...ARE YOU GOING TO TAKE THIS COMFORT PILLOW HOME TOO?
USA...

DONE!!
USA?

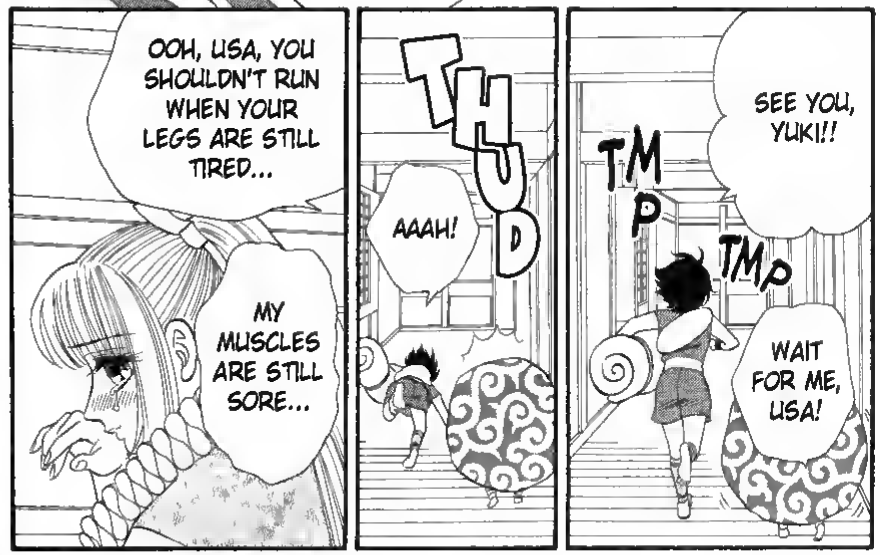
I'M SO GLAD FOR YUKI.

...TAKE THIS WITH YOU TO THE WEST!
YUKI...
TMP
TMP

I DREW EVERYBODY'S FACES ON THIS TOWEL.
TA-DAH!
GOOD LUCK, YUKI.
THIS WAY, YOU CAN BE WITH US ALL THE TIME.
You draw so well, Usa. ♪

WOBBLE
WOBBLE
Huff
Come on, Usa
Huff
GOODBYE, USAGI.
THE NEXT TIME I SEE YOU...
SHK
...I WILL BE A MAN WHO CAN TELL YOU MY FEELINGS.

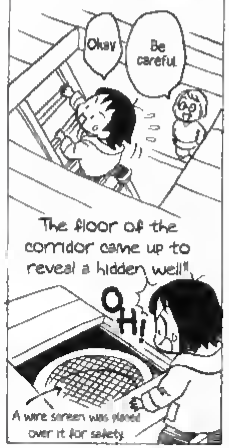
I'M NOT GOING TO SEE YOU OFF.
WELL, I HAVE TO GET GOING.
I'VE STILL GOT A LOT OF PACKING TO DO.
OOF
SWIP
HUH?
I WANT YOU TO GIVE THIS LETTER TO MY MOTHERS IN OKAZAKI ON YOUR WAY BACK TO IGA.
SURE.
I'LL SEE HOW THE BABY IS DOING TOO.
I'LL PROBABLY START CRYING IF HE SEES ME OFF...
IT'S BETTER THAT WAY.
OKAY...

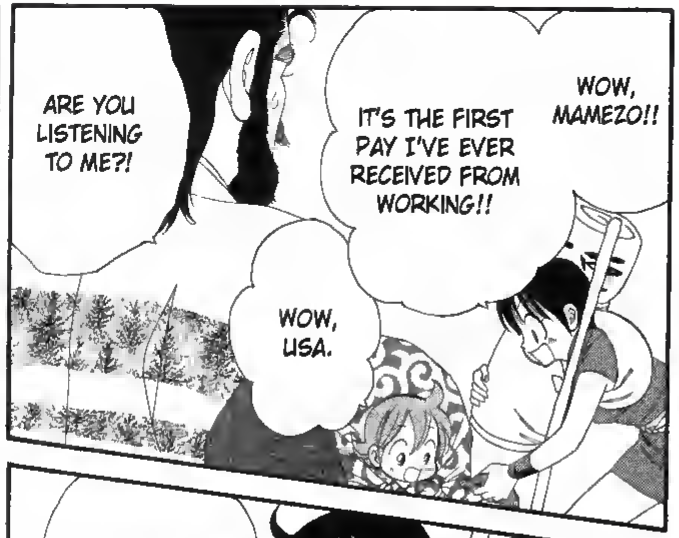

OOH, USA, YOU SHOULDN'T RUN WHEN YOUR LEGS ARE STILL TIRED...
MY MUSCLES ARE STILL SORE...
THUD
AAAH!
SEE YOU, YUKI!!
TMP
TMP
WAIT FOR ME, USA!

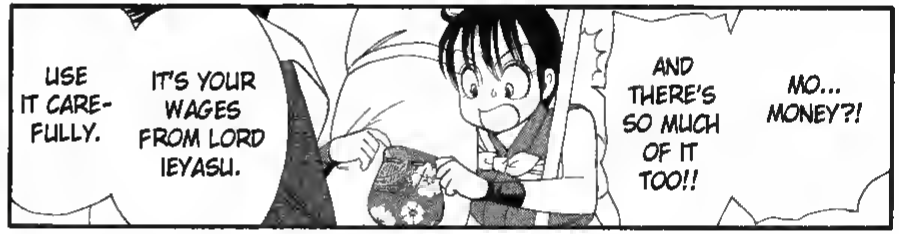
Stories About My Research Trip #3

The Kouga-ryu Ninjutsu House was filled with secret revolving doors, pitfalls, and secret passages. Just imagining that this was all part of daily life was a blast back to the Warring States Era!

Even more, the lady had me climb up to the suspended ceiling, revolve around the revolving door, and climb up a hidden ladder. I felt like I was fully immersed in the ninja experience!♪







YOU LOOK LIKE YOU'VE STILL GOT SOME ENERGY.
VO OP
NO...
THIS IS A LETTER FROM LORD IEYASU ADDRESSED TO USAGI!!
HUH?
GRAB
A LETTER FROM HAMA-MATSU...
MASTER HANZO...
HUH?!
IS IT FROM USAGI?!

WORRY
WORRY
WHAT?
"I'M SURE THAT YOU'RE HAPPILY LIVING TOGETHER WITH HANZO NOW..."
SO DOES THIS MEAN THAT USAGI HAS ALREADY LEFT HAMA-MATSU?!
WHERE IS THAT IDIOT?!

YOU'RE THE ONE WHO TOLD ME TO FIX THE ROOF, OKAY?!
I ASKED YOU TO DO THAT THREE DAYS AGO!!
POP
YOU CALLED?
WHAT ARE YOU DOING UP THERE?!

7 DAYS LATER
WHERE IS HANZOU?!
HANZOU!!

OOOH, YOU'RE SO MANLY, HANZO!
OH, YOU'RE FINISHING UP ALL YOUR WORK SO YOU CAN GO PICK UP USAGI?
He doesn't even have the energy to shout back.
YOU'RE THE ONE WHO SAID I SHOULD GO...

HMPH

...ARE YOU FEELING OKAY?
HANZO...
PHEW
I'VE BEEN WORKING ALL NIGHT FOR SEVERAL DAYS NOW.

...THERE'S AN ASSIGNMENT THAT I WOULD LIKE YOU TO DO.
OH WELL...
TMP
AH HA!
SO YOU'VE FINALLY DECIDED TO RELY ON ME! ♪
WE'RE JUST SHORT OF HANDS.

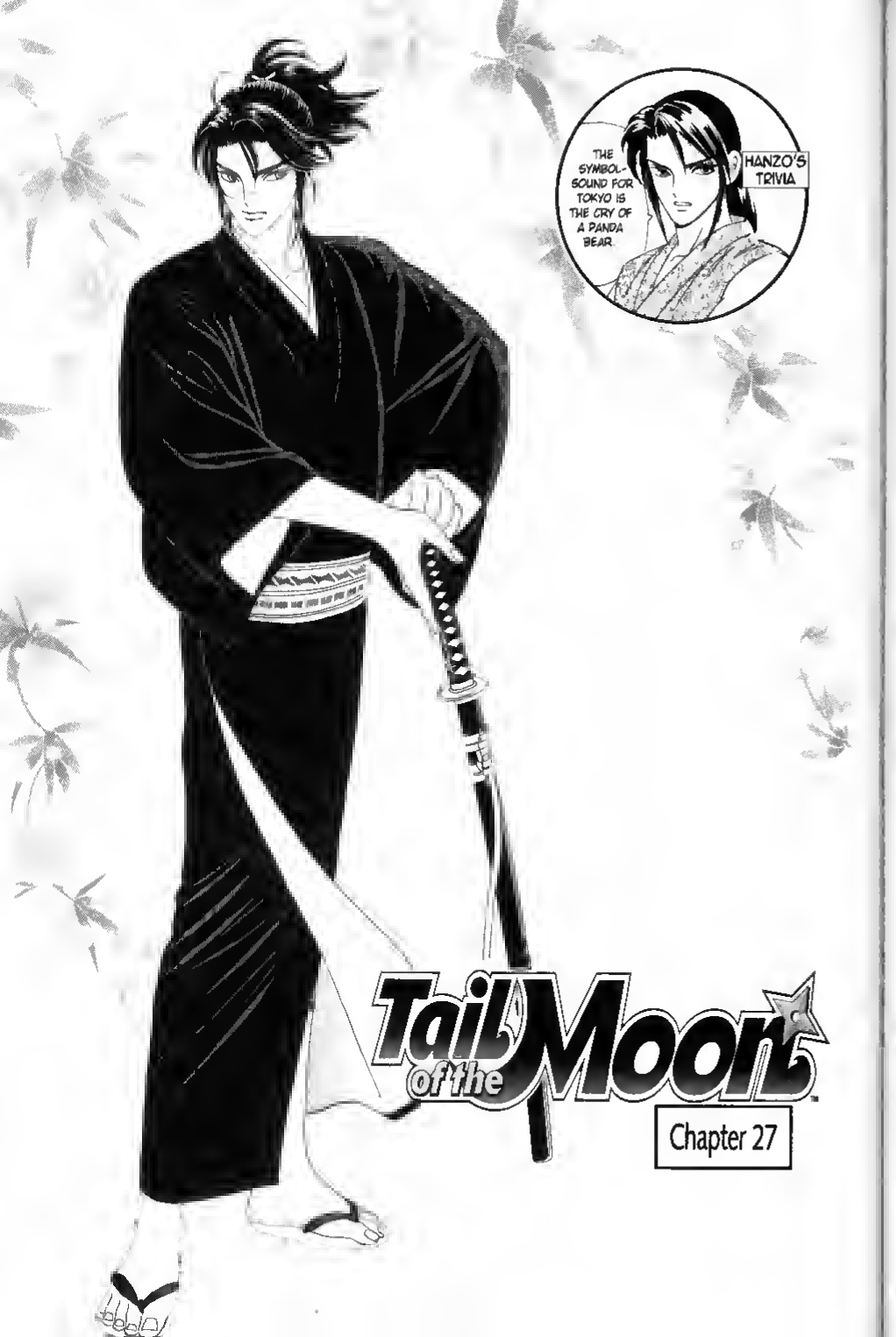
AAH...
I'VE NEVER SEEN THESE BUNS BEFORE!!
OOH!
LOOK AT THOSE GREAT LOOKING DUMPLINGS!!
WHAT SHOULD I GET HIM?
I HAVE TO GET A PRESENT FOR HANZO.
TMP
TMP
VUP
DON'T WORRY, I STILL HAVE A LOT OF MONEY LEFT. ♡
CHOMP CHOMP
USA, YOU SHOULDN'T WASTE YOUR MONEY.
DA
SH
AH...
UH H
UH H
WHA?
THIEF!!
HUH?
DA
SH
HEY!

...SO PLEASE STAY HERE A LITTLE LONGER. ♪
YOU SAVED CHIYO AND THE BABY...
EH...I REALLY SHOULD GET GOING SOON...
WARSH
WARSH
MEANWHILE, "THAT IDIOT" WAS IN OKAZAKI.
OOH, THAT LOOKS SO GOOD!!
BAM
WE GOT A SEA BREAM FOR YOU TODAY, USAGI.
AAAH, USAGI...
THANK YOU FOR THE FISH!!
I REALLY AM GOING THIS TIME.
KLAK KLAK
YOU IDIOT !!!
GURK
I HAD SOME THING TO EAT JUST A WHILE AGO...
AND IF WE DON'T HURRY BACK, THEY'RE REALLY GOING TO BE WORRIED ABOUT US...
MAMEZO!! THIS FISH IS DELICIOUS!!
CHOMP
CHOMP

GRR
WHY, YOU...
TMP
HUH?
WOAH!
TRIP
WIC
WINK
GET OUT OF THE WAY.
BEAT IT!
TMP
HEY THERE!
GIVE ME MY MONEY BACK!
DASH
TMP TMP TMP TMP
WHAT, YOU WANNA FIGHT?!
MY MONEY
TUP

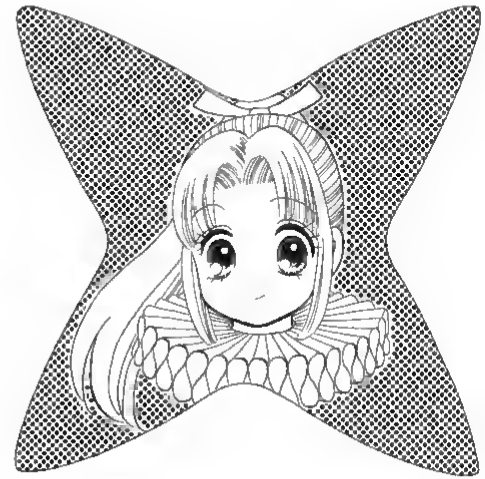
...ARE BLUE LIKE THE SEA.
AND HIS EYES...
NICE TO MEET YOU...
...MY ANGEL.

KLINK
DOMP
HIS HAIR...
...IS BLOND.



Tail of the Moon

Chapter 27



AND ALL BAD CHILDREN ARE EATEN BY THESE OGRES!!
THEY HAVE BLOND HAIR AND BLUE EYES...
WHAT'S AN OGRE?
ARE THEY SCARIER THAN YOU, GREAT-GRANDPA?
MUCH SCARIER THAN ME.
I ALWAYS THOUGHT THAT GREAT-GRANDPA WAS LYING ABOUT THE OGRES...
ACK!
WAARGH
SHUUUU
THIS IS YOURS, ISN'T IT?
BUT THEY REALLY DO EXIST!!

BLOND HAIR...
...AND BLUE EYES!
A LONG, LONG TIME AGO...
MOMOTARO TOOK A DOG, A MONKEY, AND A PHEASANT AS HIS SERVANTS TO DEFEAT THE OGRES.

TMP
JUMP
TMP
AREN'T YOU ALL SCARED OF THE OGRE?!
EVERY-ONE...
...HIKARU'S HERE.
WHERE ARE YOU GOING TO BE PERFORMING TODAY?
OOOH!
ARE YOU GOING HOME, HIKARU?
HE FLEW!

OGRE!
HERE YOU ARE.
USA, WHERE'S THE THIEF?!
TMP TMP
YOU LOOK PALE.
O...
O...
OH.
HIKARU.
HOW ARE YOU TODAY, HIKARU? ♡
YOU LOOK AS HANDSOME AS ALWAYS.
HUH?
WHY?!
HELLO, MY GODDESS-ES.
HOW ARE YOU TODAY?

HIKARU, THE TUMBLER.
OGRE?!
DON'T YOU KNOW HIKARU?!
H-HIKARU?
FLOWERS!
DON'T GO NEAR THE OGRE!!
SUFF
HE HAS WESTERN BLOOD IN HIM...
...HE IS A FAMOUS TUMBLER AROUND HERE.
HE'S NOT AN OGRE?!
KEE.
FLUP

POFF
POFF POFF
POFF
FWAH
WOW!
HIKARU! ♡

Stories About My Research Trip #5

I took my trip on a weekday morning, so I was the only one there. The guide did a one-on-one introduction session and told me all about the ninja stars and projectile weapons

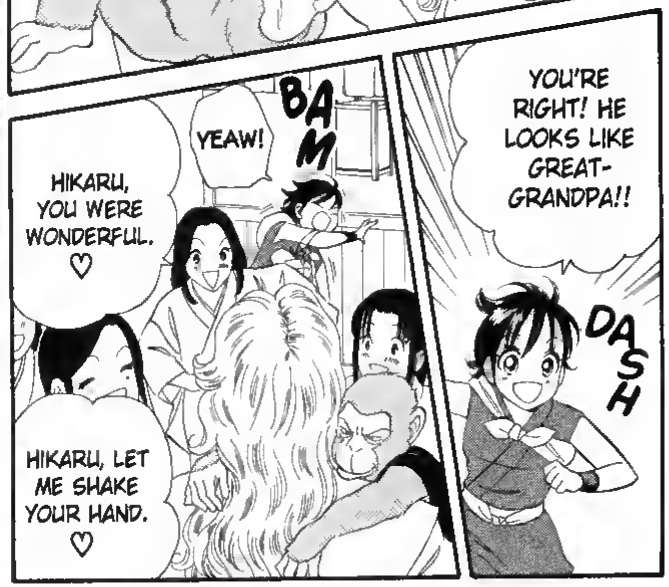
Ooh, I never knew that!

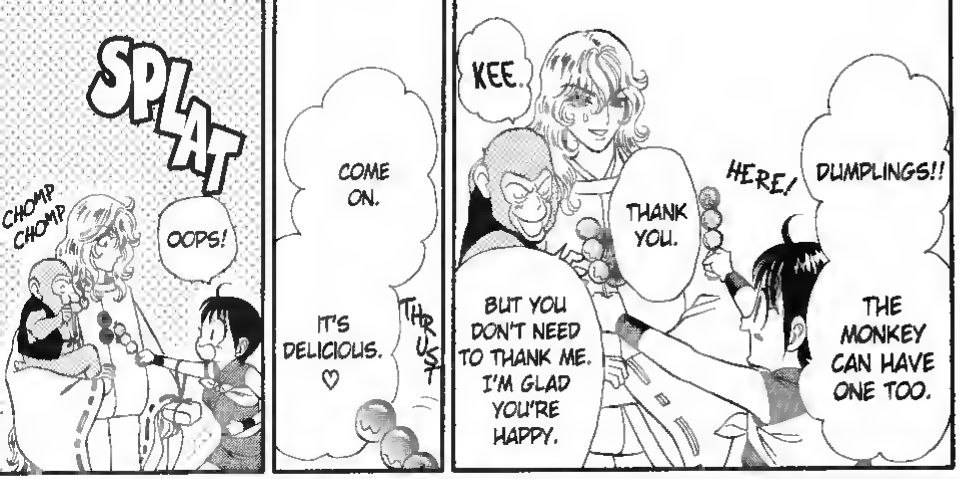
Back then, iron was very valuable, so they used thin sticks rather than the ninja stars.

I often see ninjas throwing ninja stars all the time in TV programs, animation, and manga, but I learned that was not the case

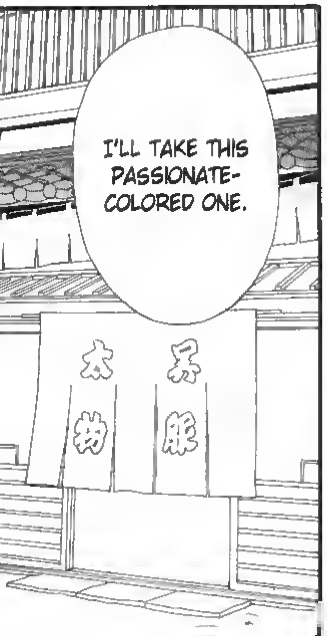
...but would go back to retrieve them later...

In real life, ninjas would throw the stick blades...

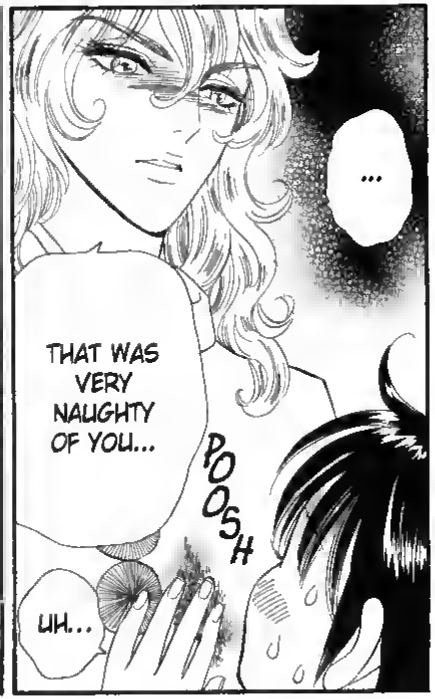



SPLAT
CHOMP CHOMP
OOPS!
COME ON.
IT'S DELICIOUS. ♡
THRUST
KEE.
THANK YOU.
BUT YOU DON'T NEED TO THANK ME. I'M GLAD YOU'RE HAPPY.
HERE!
DUMPLINGS!!
THE MONKEY CAN HAVE ONE TOO.

AAAH, THE SAUCE WON'T COME OFF...
POOSH
POOSH
LICK
LICK
THE SAUCE..
I'M SORRY!!

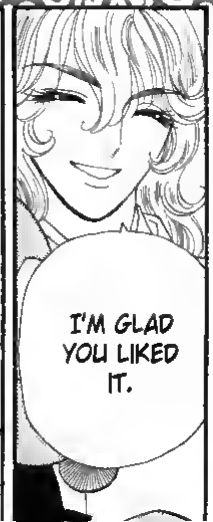

I'LL TAKE THIS PASSIONATE-COLORED ONE.
太
夫
扮
服

I'M GOING TO HAVE YOU TAKE THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR IT.
COME.
TUG
RESPON-SIBILITY?!


...
THAT WAS VERY NAUGHTY OF YOU...
POOSH
UH...

Ouch.
TMP
TMP
ARE YOU OKAY?
HIKARU...
I WANT TO TALK WITH THIS ANGEL OF MINE FOR NOW.
I'M SORRY.
BUT SHE'S ONLY A COUNTRY GIRL...
HOW WAS MY PERFORMANCE?
YES...

I KNOW! LET ME GIVE YOU THIS IN RETURN!!
THANKS FOR GETTING MY MONEY BACK FOR ME.
SHUP
SHUP


I'M GLAD YOU LIKED IT.

I'VE NEVER SEEN MAGIC TRICKS LIKE THAT!!
IT WAS WONDERFUL.

I USED MOST OF MY MONEY, BUT...
THE WIG LOOKS GOOD ON YOU TOO.
REALLY?
LISA, YOU LOOK SO PRETTY! ♡
HEE! ♡
I WONDER IF HANZO WILL THINK THAT I'M PRETTY TOO? ♡
OH
I HAVE TO GET PRESENTS FOR HANZO AND GET BACK HOME!!
DASH
KEE...
KEE KEE KEE!

SOB
THE MONEY I GOT FROM LORD IEYASU...
HEY...
I'M SURE THAT THIS WOULD LOOK GOOD ON YOU.
I DON'T NEED ONE.
I DON'T HAVE A PLACE TO WEAR IT, ANYWAY...
THANK YOU. ♪
YOU LOOK NICE TOO, SASUKE.
KEE!
WHY DO I HAVE TO PAY FOR THE MONKEY'S CLOTHES TOO?
SO THE MONKEY'S NAME IS SASUKE. ♪
A FLOWER'S LIFE IS SHORT.
IF YOU DON'T LEARN TO BLOOM, YOU'LL NEVER BECOME A GODDESS.
REALLY?
YOU'RE SUCH AN INNOCENT ANGEL...

BUT I'VE NEVER NURSED A MONKEY BEFORE...
I'M SURE THAT YOU WILL BE ABLE TO HELP HIM.
WHAT?
VUP
MY ANGEL...
...CAN YOU TAKE CARE OF SASUKE FOR A WHILE FOR ME?

I BELIEVE IN YOU!!

KEE.
I'M GOING BACK TO IGA...
SASUKE HAS CALMED DOWN A LITTLE.
Talk about being selfish...
TMP
TAKE CARE OF SASUKE!!
I REALLY CAN'T...
BAM
USAGI.

EEEEK
FOMP
SASUKE?!
DON'T SHAKE HIS BODY!!
HANG IN THERE, SASUKE!!
KEE.

YES, SORT OF...
ARE YOU AN HERBALIST?
COME ON, SWALLOW IT!
KEE...

SASUKE HAS SEIZURES FROM A CHRONIC ILLNESS EVERY NOW AND THEN...
AHH...
MAMEZO, HAND ME THE MEDICINE TO LIGHTEN THE SEIZURE!!

OKAY.
MAMEZO, GET MY EQUIPMENT OUT!!
TUNK
POKK
KEE?
HAS THIS MONKEY EVER BEEN THROUGH A MAJOR ILLNESS OR SOMETHING?!

I KNEW IT! SO IT IS YOU, USAGI!
OR IS THIS MY IMAGINATION!..?
IT'S MASTER HANZO.
TROMp
TROMp
TROMp
TROMp
MAYBE I'VE BEEN THINKING TOO MUCH ABOUT HANZO...
...AND I'M IMAGINING THAT HE'S HERE...

HANZO...
A DREAM...?

SHRED
SHRED
HEY, DON'T TOUCH MY HAIR!
IT'S CALLED SASUKE.
ACK!
MASTER TANBA!!
KEE!
DOESN'T IT LOOK LIKE GREAT-GRANDPA?
WHEN DID YOU GET ON MY BACK?
KEE KEE.
OH.
I BOUGHT THIS KIMONO MYSELF!!
Clown?
USAGI...
...SINCE WHEN DID YOU BECOME A CLOWN?!
WHAT?!
LORD IEYASU GAVE ME SOME...
WHERE DID YOU GET THE MONEY TO BUY IT IN THE FIRST PLACE?!
YOU IDIOT!!
Bad?
RETURN IT TO THE SHOP AT ONCE.
YOU'VE GOT BAD TASTE.
DON'T YOU THINK I LOOK A LITTLE PRETTY--

IT'S NOT...
...A DREAM.
YOU FOOL!
YOU HAD ME WORRIED TO DEATH!!
IT'S REALLY HANZO.
WAAAAA
IT'S HANZO.
USAGI...

I WANT TO RETURN THIS!!
OH...
DOOM
I WAS EXPECTING YOU TO BE HAPPY TO SEE ME IN THAT...
YOU'RE CUTE THE WAY YOU ARE, SO YOU DON'T NEED TO DRESS UP, USAGI.
HUH?
COULD YOU SAY THAT AGAIN?!
I WON'T SAY THE SAME THING TWICE.
DID YOU JUST SAY I WAS CUTE?!
HANZO?
HANZO...
...SAID I WAS CUTE.

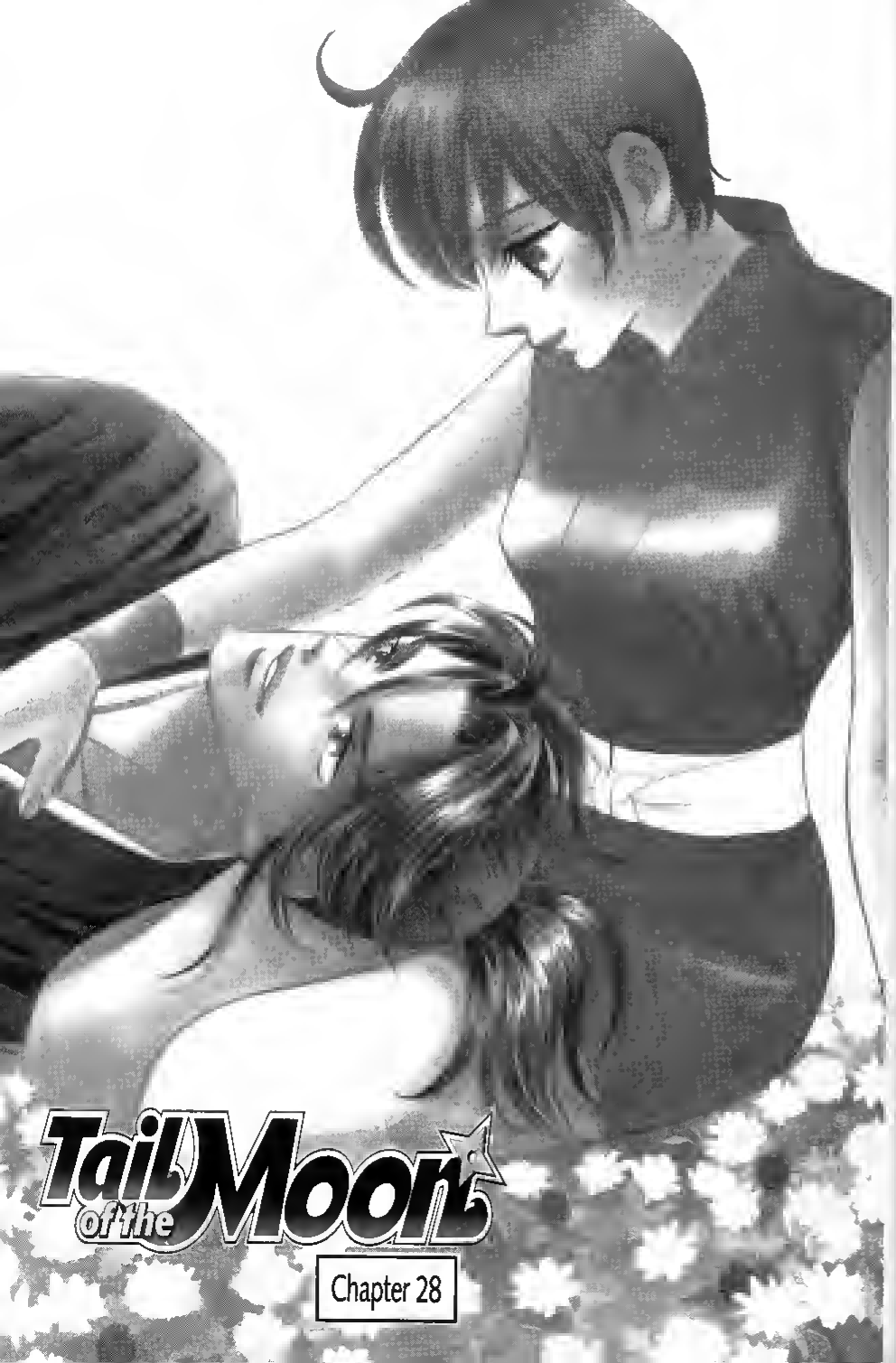
BAD TASTE?!
THAT MAN HAS A STRANGE SENSE OF BEAUTY...
...
PEEK
HE REALLY IS THE MOST HANDSOME MAN IN IGA, AS THE RUMOR SAYS...
I AGREE...
SO THAT'S HATTORI HANZO OF IGA...
THIS IS A WASTE OF MONEY.
Whaat?!
TROMP
TROMP
KEE.
SASUKE... I'M COUNTING ON YOU.
TMP
BUT I, THE MOST HANDSOME MAN IN KOUGA, AM MORE BEAUTIFUL.

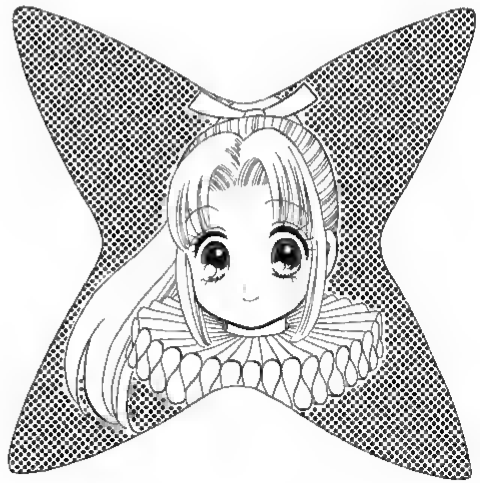
SO HE DOES HAVE SOMEBODY ELSE IN MIND...
HANZO...
MAYBE HE'S BUYING IT AS A PRESENT FOR THE WOMAN HE HAS IN MIND...?
USAGI...
WEAR THIS ON SPECIAL OCCASIONS.
I'LL PAY THIS SEPARATELY.
YOU'VE JUST RETURNED A KIMONO, SO THE REMAINING BALANCE YOU HAVE TO PAY IS...
GIVE THE REFUND BACK TO THE GIRL OVER THERE.

SWIP
MAMEZO...
DID YOU HEAR?!
WARGH!
LET ME SEE THAT PINK CLOTH IN THE BACK.
EXCUSE ME...
WHY WEREN'T YOU LISTENING?
HEAR WHAT?
I'm playing with Sasuke
YES, OF COURSE.
I LIKE THE COLOR.
I'LL TAKE IT.
BUT IT IS RATHER EXPENSIVE...
YOU HAVE AN EYE FOR QUALITY GOODS, SIR!!
I DON'T MIND.
HANZO...
WHY ARE YOU BUYING A ROLL OF KIMONO CLOTH FOR A WOMAN?

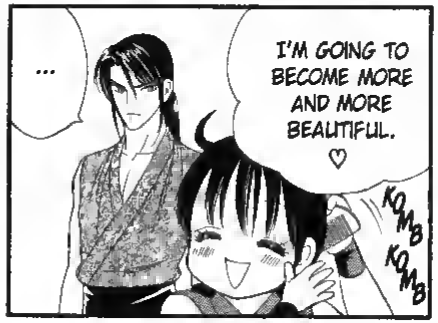
HANZO...!!
THANK YOU, HANZO.
WHAT?!
DID YOU LIKE THE OTHER KIMONO BETTER?!

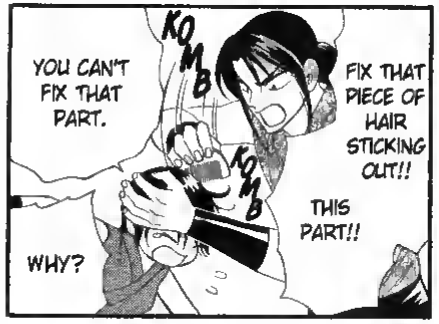
FOR ME?
WELL DONE...
...WITH YOUR ASSIGNMENT AT HAMAMATSU.


Tail of the Moon
Chapter 28



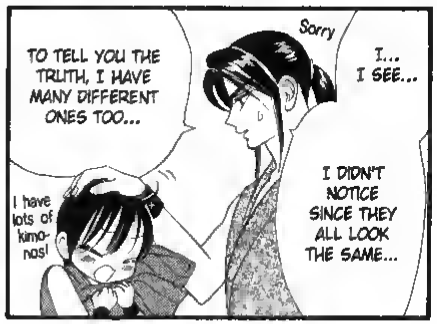
USAGI'S SECRET ②





USAGI'S SECRET ①

DO YOU ONLY HAVE THAT ONE KIMONO TO WEAR?
WHENEVER I SEE YOU, YOU'RE WEARING THE SAME KIMONO...
Leaving the eating aside for the moment...


TO TELL YOU THE TRUTH, I HAVE MANY DIFFERENT ONES TOO...
Sorry
I... I SEE...
I have lots of kimonos!
I DIDN'T NOTICE SINCE THEY ALL LOOK THE SAME...

HURRY UP AND PUT YOUR THINGS AWAY.
HANZO...!!
YOU SHOULD HAVE COME STRAIGHT BACK!!
DON'T LAUGH!!
HEE. ♡
WHAT TOOK YOU SO LONG ANYWAY?!
HANZO KEPT SCOLDING ME UNTIL LATE AFTERNOON...
HEE. ♡
GRUFF GRUFF
AND WHAT'S THAT LOOK ON YOUR FACE?!
...BUT I'M STILL HAPPY. ♡
WHAT ARE YOU SMILING AT?!
SPIN
ARE YOU EVEN LISTENING TO ME?

AAAH
I FORGOT TO BUY YOU... ...A PRESENT!!
WHAT IS IT?!
AH!
STOP TAKING STUFF OUT.
BUT I CAN ONLY SHOW YOU THIS ONE...
WAR GH!
AND THIS SHINY POT...
I'VE ONLY GOT THE BUNS TO GIVE YOU...
I DON'T WANT ANYTHING.
THE BIGGEST PRESENT FOR ME IS HAVING YOU HERE.

I'LL WAKE UP BEFORE THE SUN SETS...
MAMEZO, YOU CAN GO AND PLAY OVER THERE.
DON'T WORRY. JUST GET SOME REST!!
PAT
SPIN
WELL...
PAT
PAT
YOU CAN SLEEP ON MY LAP. ♡
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

LET'S GO, SASUKE.
VEEN
BA-BUMP
BA-BUMP
SUMP
IF...
IF YOU SAY SO...

BA-BUMP
BA-BUMP
BA-BUMP
WOW... ♡
BA-BUMP

EI...
...EIGHT DAYS?!
I HAVEN'T SLEPT A WINK FOR THE LAST EIGHT DAYS...
I JUST NEED SLEEP...
HANZO, ARE YOU ILL?!
SPIN
SPIN
HANZO?
LET ME REST AWHILE...

HANZO, YOU CAN SLEEP HERE.
FWUP
I'LL JUST REST FOR AN HOUR...

OH, I KNOW!!
A PILLOW...
WHY DO YOU HAVE A FUTON?
SPIN
SPIN

PAT
PAT
HERE YOU ARE, HANZO!!

HANZO'S HEAD...IT SUDDENLY GOT HEAVY.
HE MUST HAVE FALLEN ASLEEP...
GLOOM
HANZO'S FACE IS FARTHER AWAY NOW...
SIGH...
I JUST DROOLED...
WIPE
I'M SORRY!!
KEEP YOUR MOUTH SHUT!
RWL
WIP
WIP
OH.
HE DIDN'T SLEEP FOR EIGHT DAYS...
HE MUST HAVE BEEN BUSY WITH WORK...
BUT HE STILL CAME TO PICK ME UP EVEN THOUGH HE WAS BUSY...
TH-THUMP

HE'S GOT REALLY LONG EYE-BROWS...
BA-BUMP BA-BUMP
HANZO IS SLEEPING ON MY LAP...
AND HIS SKIN...
I WONDER WHY IT'S SO BEAUTI-FUL...?
THE PERSON OF MY DREAMS IS SO CLOSE TO ME...
HANZO...
PLIP
SNIFF
DON'T CRY...

!
THEY'RE BEGINNING TO GET NUMB...
OH NO...
MY LEGS...
...AND MY HAPPINESS WILL COME TO AN END!!
I HAVE TO HOLD STILL OR HANZO'S NAP...
URGH!
DON'T MOVE, HANZO!!
HM...
USA, IS THERE ANYTHING WRONG?
TMP
TMP
NURGH...
!
ZZT
GRAB
KEE!
JUMP
USAGI LOOKS BLOOD-THIRSTY...
DON'T TOUCH ME!
GLARE

...HAPPY NOW...
I'M...
...SO VERY...
I WISH IT COULD BE LIKE THIS FOREVER...

THIS HANZO...
...SUPPORTED ME...
HUG
THEN YOU NO LONGER NEED IT.
WHY?
I STILL NEED IT!
WELL... I SORT OF MESSED UP ON IT...
THIS IS WHAT MY FACE LOOKS LIKE TO YOU?

...
I THINK USA'S LEGS ARE NUMB...
BA-BUMP BA-BUMP
ARGH...
ARGH...
KEE!
YEOW!
HUH?
I CAN'T EVEN FEEL MY LAP...
HANZO... YOU CAN STILL SLEEP ON MY LAP...
HAN...
YOU NEED TO TRAIN MORE.
LET'S GET GOING.
I'M FINE NOW.
IT'S NO ORDINARY FUTON.
IT'S MY HANZO COMFORT PILLOW.
WHY ARE YOU CARRYING A FUTON AROUND WITH YOU?
SOB

I LOVE YOU, HANZO!
DOMP
I KNOW.

YOU HAVE ME, USAGI.
YES.

BA-BUMP
HANZO...
SUFF
IF YOU KEEP TOUCHING ME LIKE THAT, I...
SUFF SUFF SUFF
COULD THIS BE...
HUFF HUFF
SQUEEZE
CUDDLING ?!
AAAH!♡

IT'S LIKE A DREAM.
HANZO'S...
...LARGE WARM HANDS...
...HOLDING ME...
IT FEELS SO GOOD...

...
THONK
YEOW!
ONE FINGER...
VUP
!
OUCH.
A NINJA SHOULD BE ABLE TO SUPPORT HIS OR HER OWN WEIGHT WITH ONE FINGER.
IT'S IMPOSSIBLE TO DO THAT WITH ONE FINGER!
I CAN DO IT.
DON'T YOU GET IT?
HUH...?

PINCH
OOH!♥
HANZO...
HUFF
HUFF
USAGI.
PINCH
WHAT IS ALL THIS MEAT?
HUFF
MEAT ?!
HUFF
TRY HANGING ON THIS BRANCH WITH ONE FINGER.
One finger?
WHY?
JUST TRY IT.
WHAT...
SHAKE
SHAKE
FLAIL
REMEMBER, ONE FINGER.
LIFT
HUP!
ARGH.
HOP
HOP

I'LL GO ON A DIET!!
HANZO!
GURG
IF YOU WANT TO EAT IT, DO SO.
YOU'RE THE ONE WHO'S GOING TO REGRET IT LATER.
GUG
IS THAT YOUR STOMACH?
I...I'LL START THE DIET TOMORROW, SO CAN I EAT ONE?
HAVE ONE TOO, HANZO
I DON'T WANT ONE.
GUG
YOU'RE NOT GOING TO BE ANGRY LATER?
ARE YOU SURE?
YOU CAN HAVE IT MAMEZO...
SOB
CHOMP CHOMP

SHOCK
GAINED WEIGHT?!
YOU'VE GAINED TOO MUCH WEIGHT, USAGI.
YOU ARE 30% HEAVIER THAN WHEN WE PARTED IN HAMAMATSU.
DOOM
I'M WHAT?!
HOW COULD USAGI GAIN WEIGHT WHEN I WAS SO WORRIED THAT I LOST WEIGHT?!
YOU EAT TOO MUCH, USA.

Stories About My Research Trip #6

There's still a lot to talk about for my trip to the Kouga-ryu Ninjutsu House, so I'll continue writing about it in the next volume. Please look forward to it!!

I've done the animals of the zodiac for the many faces of Mamezo, so I'm open to requests for new transformations.

Feel free to request other characters than Mamezo as well. Please send in your requests! ♡

See you in volume 5! ♪

Rinko Ueda

I'M SCARED TO FIND OUT...

COMING!

NEXT DAY

WELCOME BACK.

WELCOME BACK.

WELL DONE, USAGI. ♪

DID I GAIN THAT MUCH WEIGHT?

PINCH

WALK FASTER, USAGI.

TMP TMP TMP TMP

KREE KREE

SIGH...

"YOU'VE GOTTEN FAT LATELY, USAGI."

"FAT USAGI..."

...

IDEALIZATION

I'M GOING TO LOSE WEIGHT, BECOME PRETTY, AND MARRY HANZO!!

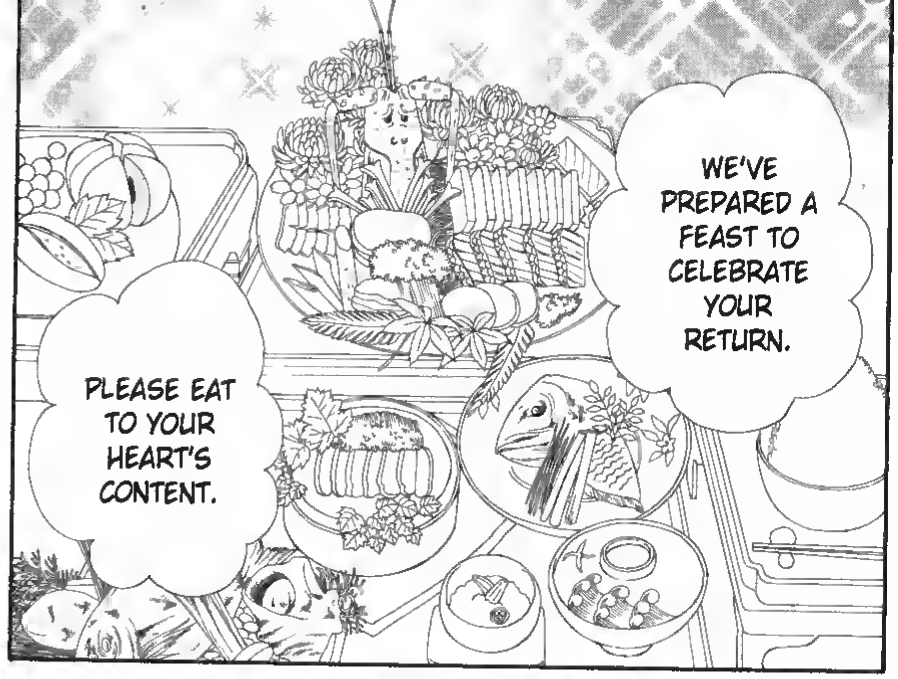
I'M SERIOUSLY GOING TO HAVE TO LOSE WEIGHT.

...WHAT IF THE WOMAN HANZO CHOSE WASN'T ME?

BUT...

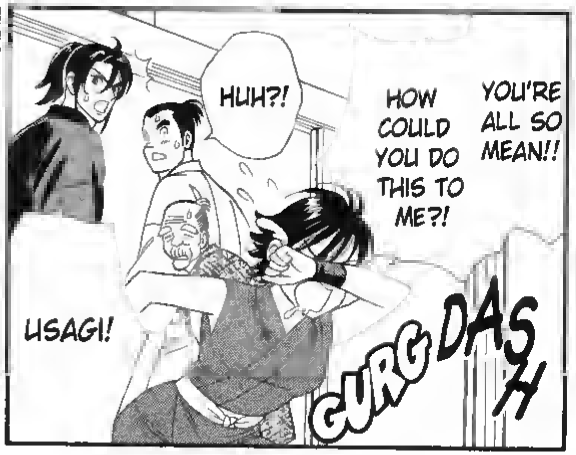
...

HURRY UP!


WE'VE PREPARED A FEAST TO CELEBRATE YOUR RETURN.
PLEASE EAT TO YOUR HEART'S CONTENT.

WOW, IT'S A FEAST!
GURG
AGK!

TROMP TROMP
COME BACK!!
MAYBE USAGI DIDN'T LIKE THE FOOD WE PREPARED?


HUH?!
HOW COULD YOU DO THIS TO ME?!
YOU'RE ALL SO MEAN!!
USAGI!
GURG DASH

YOU JUST NEED TO EAT LESS.
I HAVEN'T EATEN ANYTHING SINCE YESTER-DAY...
BUT...
SOB SOB
GURG
IT TOOK THEM A LOT OF TIME TO MAKE ALL THAT FOOD FOR YOU, USAGI!

DON'T CRY!
SOB
BUT I'M NOT CONFIDENT I'LL BE ABLE TO DO THAT.

HANZO...
GURG
I'M VULNERABLE TO YOUR TEARS...

HEE.
LONG TIME NO SEE...
...HANZO. ♡
TO BE CONTINUED...

SWISH
TOK
HOW COULD YOU SAY THAT...
...WHEN YOU'VE GOT ME?
WHO DID THAT?!
AAAH! AAAH!

Ever since I started writing this series, I have begun to let go of my "hang-ups" even more than before. If I'm too fastidious about something, I limit my chances of finding new ideas. I intend to be fastidious about not being fastidious so that I can create fun stories about situations that seem impossible or outrageous.

–Rinko Ueda

Rinko Ueda is from Nara prefecture. She enjoys listening to the radio, drama CDs, and Rakugo comedy performances. Her works include *Ryo*, a series based on the legend of Gojo Bridge, *Home*, a story about love crossing national boundaries, and *Tail of the Moon (Tsuki no Shippo)*, a romantic ninja comedy.

The ways of the ninja are mysterious indeed, so here is a glossary of terms to help you navigate the intricacies of their world.

Page 20: **Ku**
"Ku" is short for kuma, the Japanese word for "bear"

Page 29: **Best Jeanist Award**
The "Best Jeanist Award" is an annual Japanese Award given to those who look cool in jeans.

Page 35: **Kuji finger weaving**
In Buddhism, Kuji finger weaving dispels evil and bad influences.

Page 38: **Rabbit**
Usagi means "rabbit" in Japanese

Page 136: **Momotaro**
Momotaro is usually translated in English as "Peach Boy," a folktale about a boy who is born from a giant peach. He defeats a demon to bring back treasure to his parents.

Page 2: **Shimo no Hanzo**
Shimo no means "the Lower," and in this case refers to Hanzo's geographic location rather than social status.

Page 2: **Iga**
Iga is a region on the island of Kyushu, and also the name of the famous ninja clan that orginated there. Another area famous for its ninja is Koga, in the Shiga prefecture on Honshu. Many books claim that these two ninja clans were mortal enemies, but in reality inter-ninja relations were not as bad as stories paint them.

Page 4: **Matsutake**
Matsutake is a specific type of mushroom that can only be found at the foot of Japanese red pines. It is considered one of the greatest Japanese delicacies and it's unbelievably expensive.

Page 4: **Zodiac**
Usagi is referring to the oriental zodiac. It rotates according to a 12-year cycle: Mouse, Cow, Tiger, Rabbit, Dragon, Snake, Horse, Sheep, Monkey, Bird, Dog, Boar.

Page 7: **Kouga**
Kouga is another famous ninja area. Iga and Kouga are the two most famous places for ninja in Japan.